Problems of COMMUNISM

Poems from the Underground

Literature

GEORGE GIBIAN
MAURICE FRIEDBERG
GEORGE STEINER

Values • Attitudes

PETER H. JUVILER
ALLEN KASSOF
A. ZR.

The USSR and Disarmament

RICHARD J. BARNET

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THE SOVIET UNION

Poems from the Underground 1
The Conscience of a Generation, *by A. Zr* 7
Communist Morality and Soviet Youth, *by Peter H. Juviler* 16
Recent Soviet Literature, *by George Gibian* 25

CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS

Russia, China, and the World: III
The Soviet Attitude on Disarmament, *by Richard J. Barnet* 32

NONCOMMUNIST AREAS

Communism in Greece, *by Efthimios Papageorgiou* 38

BOOKS

The Writer and Communism, *by George Steiner* 45
What Makes a Communist? *by Karl A. Wittfogel* 49

NOTES AND VIEWS

Moscow Discovers Public Opinion Polls, *by Allen Kassof* 52
Cultural Exchange: How Reciprocal?, *by Maurice Friedberg* 55
Correspondence 58

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Poems from the Underground

EDITORS' NOTE: In men's search for truth the poet plays a special role: with artistic sensibility and a creative imagination, free from the conformities of conventional thought and expression, he illuminates the moral condition of his generation with an incisiveness denied to most others. If the pen is his instrument of communication, it is also (perhaps primarily) the key to his own salvation. Thus write he must, and where—as in the Soviet Union—organized society denies him publication of his innermost thought, he writes for "the drawer," for posterity and perhaps a few personal friends. In this sense then the poems that we offer below represent not only an artistic confession of a Soviet intellectual's moral conflict with the institutions and ideologies of his society, but also a telling account of the intellectual history of the contemporary Soviet generation. Drawing on his personal experiences in the USSR, the translator, writing under the pseudonym A. Zr., sets in the accompanying commentary the poet's ideas in the broader context of recent Soviet history. In the articles that follow, Mr. Juviler comments on the conflict between official Soviet ideology and the private aspirations of Soviet youth, and Mr. Gibian surveys recent developments in Soviet literature. Mr. Steiner's essay (in the book review section) contains important insights into the history of the relations between communism and modern literature and illuminates the role of the literary artist in Communist society.

I.

Своевременные размышления

В то утро в мавзолее был похоронен
Сталин,
А вечер был обычен — прозрачен и
хрустален.
Шагал я тихо, мирно,
Наедине с Москвой
И вот что думал, верно,
Как парень с головой:
Эпоха зрелищ кончена,
Пришла эпоха хлеба.
Перекур объявлен
У штурмовавших небо.
Перемотать портянки
Присел на час народ,
В своих ботинках спящий
Нивесть который год.

I.

Contemporary Reflections

On that morning, in the mausoleum, Stalin was
buried,
And the evening was ordinary—crystal clear and
limpid.
I walked quietly, tranquilly,
Alone with Moscow
And here is what I thought, verily,
Like a clever fellow:
The epoch of spectacles has ended,
The epoch of bread has arrived.
A smoking break has been declared
For those who have been storming the heavens.
The people, asleep in its shoes,
For God knows how long,
Has sat down for an hour
To rewind its footcloths.

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Нет, я не думал этого,
А думал я другое:
Что вот он был и нет его,
Гиганта и героя.
На брошенный, оставленный
Москва
похожа
дом.
Как будем жить без Сталина?

Я посмотрел кругом:
Москва была не грустная, Москва была пустая.
Нельзя грустить без устали. Все до смерти устали.
Все спали, только дворники
Неистово мели,
Как будто рвали корни и
Скребли из-под земли,
Как будто выдирали из перезябшей почвы
Его приказов окрик, его декретов почерк:
Следы трехдневной смерти
И старые следы —
Тридцатилетней власти,
Величья и беды.
Я шел все дальше, дальше,
И предо мной предстали
Его дворцы, заводы —
Все, что воздвигнул Сталин:
Высотных зданий башни,
Квадраты площадей . . .

Социализм был выстроен.
Посели в нем людей.

No, I didn't think that,
I thought something else:
That here he was, and now he is not,
The giant and the hero.
Moscow is like
a forsaken
deserted
house.
How will we live without Stalin?

I looked around:
Moscow did not lament, Moscow was vacant.
You cannot grieve unceasingly. All are tired to death.
Everyone was sleeping, only the janitors
Were furiously sweeping.
As if they were tearing at roots and
Raking from beneath the earth,
As if they were ripping from the frozen soil
The shriek of his orders, the handwriting of his decrees:
The traces of a three-day death
And old traces—
Of a thirty-year reign,
Of grandeur and calamity.
I walked on and on
And before me rose
His palaces, factories—
Everything that Stalin built:
The towers of his skyscrapers,
The quadrangles of his squares . . .

Socialism was constructed.
Settle people in it.

II.

Надо, чтобы дети или звери,
Чтоб солдаты или, скажем, бабы,
К вам питали полное доверье
Или полюбили вас, хотя бы.

Обмануть детей не очень просто.
Баба тоже не пойдет за подлым,
Лошадь сбросит на скаку прохвоста,
А солдат поймет, где ложь, где подвиг.

Ну, а вас, разумных и ученых?
О, высокомудрые мужчины —
Вас водили за нос, как девчонок,
Как детей, вас за руку влачили.

Нечего ходить с улыбкой гордой
Многократно купленным за орден.

II.

It is necessary that children or animals,
That soldiers or, say, women,
Should put their whole trust in you
Or love you, even.

To deceive children is not very simple.
Nor will a woman take up with a rascal,
A horse will throw a scoundrel from the saddle,
And a soldier will know what is a lie, and what valor.

But, you, you men of reason and scholars?
Oh, you Solons—
You were led by the nose, like silly girls,
Like children, you were dragged by the hand.

You have no reason to walk with a proud smile
You who were repeatedly bought for a medal.

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Что там толковать про смысл и разум,
Многократно проданный за фразу.

Я бывал в различных обстоятельствах,
Но видна бессмертная душа
Лишь в освобожденной от предательства
В слабенькой улыбке малыша.

III.

Лакирую действительность —
Исправляю стихи.
Перечесть удивительно:
И смирны и тихи,
И не только покорны
Всем законам страны —
Соответствуют норме!
Расписанью верны!

Чтобы с черного хода
Их пустили в печать,
Мне
    за правдой
        охоту
Поручили начать.
Чтоб дорога прямая
Привела их к рублю,
Я им руки ломаю.
Я им ноги рублю.
Выдаю с головою,
Лакирую и лгу.

Все же кое-что скрою,
Кой-кого сберегу.
Самых сильных и бравых
Никому не отдам.

Я еще без поправок
Эту книгу издам!

IV.

Мы все ходили под богом,
У бога под самым боком.
Стоя на мавзолее,
Был он сильнее и злее,
Мудрее того, другого,
По имени Иегова,
Которого он низринул,
Извел, пережег на уголь,
А после из мрака вынул
И дал ему стол и угол.

What have you to say about wisdom and reason,
You have repeatedly sold yourself for a phrase.

I have been in various circumstances,
But the immortal soul can be seen
Only in the smile of a child
Weak, and free from treachery.

III.

I varnish reality—
I emend verses.
To reread them is astonishing:
They are compliant and tranquil,
And not only obedient
To all the laws of the land—
I meet my norm!
They correspond to the plan!

To get them into print
Through a back door,
I have been commissioned
To begin
    to hunt
        down truth.
But for a direct road
To lead them to the ruble,
I break their hands.
I hack off their legs.
I betray them utterly.
I varnish and I lie.

Nevertheless, some I shall hide,
Someone I shall keep safe.
The strongest and the bravest
I shall give up to no one.

I will publish this book yet
Without corrections!

IV.

We all walked under god,
By god, at his very side.
Standing on the mausoleum,
He was more powerful and wrathful,
Wiser than that other,
Whose name is Jehovah,
Whom he cast down,
Tormented, burned on hot coals,
Then pulled out from the blackness
And gave a corner and a stool.

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Мы все ходили под богом,
У бога под самым боком . . .

Однажды я шел Арбатом.
Бог ехал в пяти машинах.
От страха почти горбата
В своих пальтишках мышиных
С ним рядом дрожала охрана.

И было поздно и рано.
Серело. Вставало утро.
Бог глянул жестоко и мудро,
Всепроницающим взглядом,
Всепонимающим оком . . .

Мы все ходили под богом
И даже стояли с ним рядом.

We all were under god,
By god, at his very side . . .

Once I was walking along the Arbat.
God was driving in five automobiles.
From fear almost hunched
In their mouse-colored coats
His guard trembled beside him.

And it was early and it was late.
It was turning grey. The dawn was rising.
God looked out cruelly and wisely,
With an all-piercing glance,
With an all-knowing eye . . .

We all were under god
And even stood beside him.

V.

Я строю на песке, а тот песок
Еще недавно мне скалой казался.
Он был скалой, для всех скалой остался,
А для меня распался и потек.

Я мог бы руку долу опустить,
Я мог бы отдых пальцам дать корявым.
Я мог бы возмутиться и спросить,
За что меня и по какому праву? . .

Но верен я строительной программе . . .
Прижат к стене, вися на волоске,
Я строю, на плывущем под ногами,
На уходящем из-под ног песке.

V.

I am building on sand, and that sand
Only recently seemed to me to be a rock.
It was a rock, and remained a rock for everybody,
But for me it fell apart and began to flow away.

I might have thrown up my hands,
I might have given rest to my gnarled fingers.
I might have grown indignant and asked,
Why me, and by what right? . . .

But I am faithful to the construction program . . .
Backed up against a wall, hanging by a hair,
I am building on sand which is flowing
under my feet.

VI.

Человек

Царь природы, венец творенья
Встал за сахаром для варенья.

За всеведением или бессмертьем
Он бы в очередь в эту не влез,
Но к вареньям куда безмерней
И значительней интерес.

Метафизикам не чета я
И морали ему не читаю:

Человек должен сытно кушать
И чаи с вареньем пивать,
А потом про бессмертие слушать
И всезнаньем мозги забивать.

VI.

Man

The sovereign of nature, the crown of creation
Queued up for sugar for his jam.

For omniscience or immortality
He would not have gotten into that line,
But how much greater and more significant
His interest in jam.

I am no metaphysician
And am not reading him a moral.

A man must eat his fill
And drink his tea with jam,
And afterwards listen about immortality
And stuff his head with omniscience.

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VII.

Я судил людей и знаю точно,
Что судить людей совсем несложно —
Только погодя бывает тошно,
Если вспомнишь как-нибудь оплошно.

Кто они, мои четыре пуда
Мяса,
чтоб судить чужое мясо?
Больше никого судить не буду.
Хорошо быть не вождем, а массой.

Хорошо быть педагогом школьным
Иль сидельцем в книжном магазине
Иль судьей . . .
Каким судьей? Футбольным!
Быть на матчах пристальным разиней.

Если сны приснятся этим судьям,
Так они во сне кричать не станут.
Ну, а мы? Мы закричим,
мы будем
Вспоминать былое неустанно.

Опыт мой особенный и скверный —
Как забыть его себя заставить?

Этот стих ошибочный, неверный.
Я неправ.
Пускай меня поправят.

VII.

I have judged people and know exactly,
That to judge people is quite simple—
Only later one is sick,
If he remembers somehow inadvertently.

What is my hundredthweight
Of flesh
to judge another's flesh?
I shall never judge anyone again.
It is good to be not a leader, but one of the masses.

Good to be a schoolmaster
Or a salesman in a book store
Or a judge . . .
What kind of judge? A soccer referee!
To be a rapt gawk at the matches.

If such judges dream,
They will not cry out in their sleep.
And us? We will scream,
we will
Remember the past unremittingly.

My experience is a special and vile one—
How can I force myself to forget it?

This poem is mistaken, untrue.
I am wrong.
Let them correct me.

VIII.
Пропаганда

Сегодня я ничему не верю —
Глазам — не верю.
Ушам — не верю.
Пощупаю — тогда, пожалуй, поверю.
Если наощупь — все без обмана.

Мне вспоминаются хмурые немцы,
Печальные пленные сорок пятого года,
Стоявшие — руки по швам — на допросе.
Я спрашиваю — они отвечают:

— Вы верите Гитлеру? — Нет, не верю.
— Вы верите Герингу? — Нет, не верю.
— Вы верите Геббельсу? — О, пропаганда!
— А мне вы верите? — Минута молчания. —
— Господин комиссар, я вам не верю.
Все пропаганда. Весь мир —
пропаганда.

VIII.
Propaganda

Today I don't believe anything—
My eyes—I don't believe.
My ears—I don't believe.
I'll feel it—then, perhaps, I'll believe.
If it can be touched—everything is without deception.

I recall the frowning Germans,
The sad prisoners of 1945,
Standing—hands at sides—at the interrogation.
I ask—they answer:

—Do you believe Hitler?—No, I don't believe.
—You believe Goering?—No, I don't believe.
—You believe Goebbels?—Oh, propaganda!
—And do you believe me?—A moment of silence.
—Mr. Commissar, I don't believe you.
Everything is propaganda. The whole world is
propaganda.

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Четыре слога слова пропаганда
Гудят в ушах моих еще сегодня:
«Все пропаганда. Весь мир —
пропаганда».

Если бы я превратился в ребенка,
Снова учился в начальной школе,
И мне бы сказали такое:
Волга впадает в Каспийское море! —
Я бы, конечно, поверил. Но прежде
Нашел бы эту самую Волгу,
Спустился бы вниз по течению к морю,
Умылся его водой мутноватой
И только тогда бы, пожалуй, поверил.

Лошади едят овес и сено!
Ложь! Зимой тридцать третьего года
Я жил на тощей, как жердь, Украине.
Лошади ели сначала солому,
Потом — худые соломенные крыши,
Потом их гнали в Харьков на свалку.
Я лично видел своими глазами
Суровых, серьезных, почти что важных
Гнедых, караковых и буланых,
Молча, неспешно бродивших по свалке.
Они ходили, потом стояли,
А после падали и долго лежали.
Умирали лошади не сразу.

Лошади едят овес и сено!
Нет. Неверно. Ложь. Пропаганда.
Все — пропаганда. Весь мир —
пропаганда.

A word of four syllables—propaganda—
Sounds in my ears to this day:
"Everything is propaganda. The whole world is propaganda."

If I were to turn into a child,
Studying again in an elementary school,
And it was said to me:
The Volga falls into the Caspian Sea!—
I would, of course, believe it. But first
I'd find that Volga,
Follow its current down to the sea,
Wash myself in its turbid waters
And only then, perhaps, would I believe.

Horses eat oats and hay!
A lie! During the winter of 1933
I lived in the emaciated Ukraine.
At first the horses ate straw,
Then—the sparse straw from roofs,
Then they were driven to Kharkov to a dump.
I saw with my own eyes horses
Severe, serious, almost pompous
Bay ones and dun ones and dark-brown horses
Silently, unhurriedly wandering around the dump.
They walked, then stood
And fell and lay a long time.
They did not die quickly, the horses.

Horses eat oats and hay!
No. Not true. A lie. Propaganda.
Everything is propaganda. The whole world is propaganda.

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The Conscience of a Generation

By A. Zr.

THE POEMS THAT APPEAR in translation on the previous pages were given to me in Warsaw last summer by a Polish friend I had known in Moscow. The manuscript, as it was given to him, was unsigned, and the person who gave it to him would tell him no more than that the poems were written by someone who is not young, and who is a known poet in the Soviet Union. We sat by an open window in my friend's tiny apartment and read the poems together that warm Sunday afternoon; and drawing on our experiences of the previous year in Moscow, we discussed them in the light of what we had learned about Russian intellectuals.

We agreed that the poems provided not only a powerful example of Soviet "underground" literature, but a key to the mentality, conscience, and experiences of the intellectual generation represented by the poet. So many of the thoughts expressed in them in ideal form, in verse, were thoughts familiar to us from conversations with Russian friends and acquaintances. Many of them are not new, even in Soviet literature. During the short-lived literary movement of social protest in 1956-57, the outside world listened with strained attention to the distant voices of people who, for the first time since the beginning of Stalin's long rule, spoke in honest accents. We heard Russian writers cry out with outrage and pain as they cast aside their habitual factitious social optimism and laid bare the anatomy of a rotten society festering with bureaucratic corruption, callousness, and arbitrariness. They exposed a nation disfigured by ubiquitous dishonesty and social cowardice; and some even acknowledged, with revulsion, their own complicity in the death or exile of innocent comrades.

All of this is here in these poems. If anyone has any question about the grounds of the guilt expressed in "I have judged people . . .," they were quite clearly stated in early 1957 in a poem by Margarita Aliger, "The Real Truth." [1] She admits having voted to condemn writer friends who had fallen victim to Stalin's purges, describes her shame for not having spoken out in their defense, and offers in her own defense that she had been misled and deceived by the "pompous phraseology" of the charges against them. No doubt in Stalin's time the fearful consequences of daring to defend his victims encouraged people to be stupid and actually to convince themselves of things that were unreasonable, but which it was healthier to believe. Perhaps our anonymous poet could claim with equal right to have "judged people" in blindness and stupidity, and not in cowardice; but he says nothing of this. His agony is unextenuated, though it is graced by pathetic defiance in the poem's last lines: "This poem is mistaken, untrue./I am wrong./Let them correct me."

But there are also new themes in these poems. Even during the height of the thaw in 1956-57, Soviet editors had not softened to the point of permitting writers the full expression of their views, nor did the writers sense that the time had arrived to express themselves freely. Among the very authors of the startlingly critical works of those years were some who saved the unpublishable residue of their criticisms for just such manuscripts as the one we have before us. From these poems we can discern the full range of their partially revealed discontents.

We have never before heard a Soviet writer speak, for example, on the subject of propaganda, that indigestible staple of the Soviet citizen's daily intellectual diet; nor have we ever had, as in "I varnish reality . . .," a writer's confession of the unpleasant work he does in the Soviet Union. The last poem is interesting on another count, for it gives us a glimpse of that highly-

A. Zr. *is the pseudonym of a student of Soviet literature who recently returned from an extended stay in the USSR.*

[1] *Novyi mir,* Nos. 3 and 4, 1957.

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developed underworld of Soviet literature which one suspects must exist as an outlet for writers whose public pursuit of their craft is degraded by dishonesty. The honest ones do indeed write——"for the desk drawer," as they say—whatever has personal or artistic meaning for them. And it is a further measure of the powerful longing of both Soviet readers and writers for truthfulness that to speak of a writer as "honest" (*chestnyi*)—not in the sense that he scrupulously avoids sentimentality or any of the other failures of the imagination that betray artistic truth, but in the unadorned sense that he doesn't write lies or propaganda—is to give him the highest praise possible in the Soviet Union.

THERE ARE TWO main avenues whereby Soviet writers of "desk-drawer" manuscripts may reach an audience. One is the private literary evening, an institution which seems to have vanished from the American scene, but which continues to flourish in the Soviet Union. Apart from this, underground manuscripts are circulated in typewritten copies, and judging by the complete files that some writers have of their colleagues' unpublishable works, there must be either a good number of self-sacrificing authors who are willing to take the trouble of making extra copies to pass on to friends, or else a well-developed system of clandestine reproduction and loan. The typing of forbidden manuscripts has, by the way, been turned to profit by some enterprising, if not so self-sacrificing, spirits. In 1958, typewritten copies of *Doctor Zhivago* were selling in Moscow for 1,000 rubles, and smuggled copies of the printed American (Russian language) edition, I was told, went for 2,000 rubles.

It is hard to say how widespread and typical the writing of these manuscripts is. My guess is that apart from the arrant hacks who are content to write according to the official formulas purely for money, very many Soviet authors are troubled by areas of creative unfulfillment which demand satisfaction. Not everything they write is of a direct political character. Young writers, in particular, are often more interested in experimenting with literary forms that are too *outré* for the tastes of Soviet editors, than they are in politics. Then, too, I have seen manuscripts which have no political axe to grind but still would be considered heretical, either because they describe Soviet life in too tragic, satirical, or simply too objective a fashion, or because the artistic temperament they reveal is too defiantly individualistic. An interesting sidelight is that considerably less prose than poetry is written for non-publication, so to speak. The reason is that prose works are normally longer and require a greater investment of time. Obviously, it takes unique dedication and character to write for a doubtful posterity, especially when this has to be done at the expense of earning one's living.

The poems in our manuscript are undated. They show evidence, however, of having been written under the immediate impact of the two most important events of the last decade of Soviet history—Stalin's death and Khrushchev's secret speech at the 20th Party Congress—which would date them between 1953 and 1957. They span a period of deepening disillusionment in the author as he comes more and more to grasp the significance of Stalin's rule. The poems "Contemporary Reflections" and "We all walked under god . . .," which are among the first in order of appearance in the manuscript, were unquestionably written before the 20th Congress, and the awakened critical thought reflected in them is not yet as devastating as it is in the later poems in the manuscript. The poet's initial reaction to the shock of Stalin's death seems to be one of bewildered ambivalence —a balancing of the material achievements of the dictator's rule against its calamities. But in the end the negation is complete, and one is aware only of the unrelieved burden of terrible pain and knowledge. The last remaining rock of intellectual support that, despite everything, the poet thought Stalin had bequeathed to him—"Socialism was constructed"—has crumbled into the shifting sand of total disbelief.

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WHAT WILL PERHAPS surprise and shock the non-Soviet reader is the genuine sense of loss the poet experienced at Stalin's death. The attitude expressed in the earlier poems combines at least equal parts of horror and admiration, even veneration. The official line since 1956 has right along been that Stalin possessed as many virtues as he did vices, and this is the line one would expect to find in "legal" literature about him. Condemnation mixed with admiration is characteristic, for example, of Tvardovsky's reflections on Stalin in *Za daliu dal*.[2] Yet here it is again, in poetry written not for the eyes of the Soviet censor but for the poet himself and his friends. I, for one, was struck by the reference to Stalin as a "god"—ironic, it is true, but not so destructively ironic as to turn the appelation into a bitter joke and remove all foundation from it.

It is worth dwelling for a moment on the attitude of the Russians toward Stalin. One autumn evening last

[2] A. T. Tvardovsky, *Sobranie sochinenii,* Gosizdat Khudozhestvennoi Literatury, Moscow, 1960, Vol. III.

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year in Leningrad, he was described to me as a "vampire"—an image more in keeping with the one we have of him in the West. I had met a young man in a restaurant, where he had overheard a waitress telling me about the terrifying sacrifices the Russians had made during the last war, of how miserable life had been just afterwards and how much better it was now, of her faith in the future and her hope that we Americans would leave her people in peace. Her tears were sincere. (It is a rare Russian who can talk about the last war without a display of genuine feeling that evokes pity and horror in the listener.) Having overheard the waitress' outburst, the young man came up to me as I was leaving the restaurant and introduced himself. He apologized for what he had mistaken as a propaganda harangue by the waitress—actually I was sympathetic and not in the least offended—and then invited me for a stroll. We walked for hours—through the Marsovoye Pole, where an eternal light burns for the heroes of the revolution, along the Nevsky Prospekt, and through back streets deserted in the cool late autumn evening. (I was to take many a walk like that one, sometimes in freezing winter weather, to hear the story of some Russian acquaintance who preferred to talk on the street where one could be certain of not being overheard. And such is the Russian's talent for talking, and his irrepressible desire to express his pent-up thoughts to someone he knows will listen sympathetically and will not betray him, that I always returned home on these occasions with a pain in the small of my back from having walked too long.)

My young acquaintance turned out to be a scientist and amateur writer. He told me of everything that troubled him, and seemed in a rush to get it all said in this one night. Normally, he said, he was taciturn and guarded in talking with other Russians, except a very few close friends. What poured out of him was astonishing. Though born into a family of mixed faith and himself an atheist until early manhood, he told me that he was now a religious man, and that if he were ever to go to the West, he would embrace Catholicism because its strong discipline and ritual appealed to him. He could not understand how his countrymen could bear the realities of Soviet life without strong religious faith. His own faith was his sole consolation, and it gave him the strength to work and to be patient. He was one of the few religious Russians I met—and also one of the few who fitted the picture of the intensely spiritual Russian made familiar by Dostoevsky.

I was impressed by the passion, excitement and intelligence of his talk, by the dark handsomeness of his features, and by his wonderful eyes, now bright with wit, humor and friendliness, now still with inwardness. When we reached the Neva, in front of the Admiralty, where two blackened bronze lions stand on pedestals above the stepped stone embankment leading down to the river, he asked if I would like him to recite parts of a story he had written about the events of the days following Stalin's death. He had once put it on paper, but then had destroyed the manuscript for fear that it might fall into the wrong hands, and had committed it to memory. The story was about the crushing to death of large numbers of young people in the stampede that took place in Moscow the first day that Stalin's body lay in state for public view. (The little girl, Katya, in Abram Tertz's story *The Trial Begins*,[3] was also a victim of this stampede.) Countless thousands of people had crowded into the streets to have a last look at Stalin and confirm with their own eyes the awesome fact of his death. The approaches to the Red Square were jammed beyond belief. Suddenly, something happened; the crowd began to move uncontrollably, panic seized it, and many, mainly young people, were crushed underfoot, against the walls of buildings, or in passageways. I remember the words with which my friend's story ended: "And even in death this vampire in the uniform of a generalissimo demanded sacrificial victims."

TO THIS YOUNG Russian Stalin represented pure evil and was as hateful as the system of government he created. But my friend's attitude was by no means shared by all Russians, many of whom still speak of Stalin with a curious lack of bitterness and with a willingness to admit a positive side to his rule that seemed unthinkable and morally blind to an outsider. This attitude, I believe, stems from a retrospective evaluation of Stalin's social and economic programs, and I want for a moment to consider what the Russians thought of him while he was alive; otherwise, it will be impossible to understand how the adult, intelligent author of "Contemporary Reflections" could have written soon after Stalin's death, "How will we live without Stalin?" and could even call him a "god."

In the first place—and this is a purely psychological datum—if most Russians did not actually regard Stalin as a kind of divinity during his lifetime, they at least regarded him as a figure of superhuman proportions, one that the imagination could assimilate only by mythic hyperbole. Abram Tertz, in *The Trial Begins*, also needs to call Stalin "The Master" and "a god" in order to convey something of his psychological impact on the people he ruled. Everything about Stalin was calculated to contribute to this mystique—his Eastern origins, his

[3] *Encounter*, No. 76, January 1960.

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remote inaccessibility, the strength, absolutism and swift arbitrariness of his rule—not to speak of the prodigious propaganda effort, embracing every printed and spoken word in every sphere of culture, that was made to portray Stalin as an omniscient and omnipotent being. If it did not actually induce belief, this effort certainly staggered the imagination by its all-pervasiveness and myth-making quality. It is a striking testimonial to the grip of this mystique that even to many mature intellectuals, our poet among them, the 1956 denunciation of the "personality cult" and the revelation of the horrendous crimes of the Stalin era came as a deep traumatic shock. It is less surprising that this was true of the young. An artist, who was a first-year university student at the time of these events, told me how the attack upon the benevolent god they actually had believed Stalin to be produced in himself and his friends a mood of insupportable despair: their faith had been shattered, and henceforth they could believe in nothing.

THERE WERE OTHER powerful considerations that blinded Russian intellectuals, especially of the generation of the author of these poems, to the evils of Stalin's rule. The Russian intelligentsia traditionally—and this applies with special force to the Soviet Russian intelligentsia—have been haunted and driven by the desire to shake off their country's economic backwardness. Thus, whatever doubts and questions some of Stalin's acts inspired in them were stilled by the fact that others brought grand accomplishments: "And before me rose/his palaces, factories—/Everything that Stalin built:/the towers of his skyscrapers,/The quadrangles of his squares. . . ." For those Russian intellectuals who identified the objectives of the Revolution with economic progress and a rich modern life—they were a majority in the 1930's and are still a majority today—there was no question that Stalin was pushing Russia toward these ultimate goals. And according to the gigantic, concerted propaganda chorus, he was doing it single-handedly.

Every success that was scored, from the astonishingly rapid transformation of Russia into a powerful industrial nation to the victory over Germany, was Stalin's personal success. Vsevolod Kochetov is not a writer who can be trusted to present anything but the official point of view; nevertheless, in his novel *The Yershov Brothers,* there is a character who describes his uncritical attitude towards the Stalin cult in the days when it was being promoted in a way which, I believe, accurately reflects the popular mood of the time: "We saw the successes of the country, saw how it was growing and getting strong. We saw great works. We participated in those works, we participated in the war in which German fascism was buried. And, for us, these were the main things." [4]

The effectiveness of the propaganda glorifying Stalin was thus, in large part, based on the solid achievements people saw around them; the nation was ripe for mass hypnosis. This helps to explain why in the last war Russian soldiers—and not just the simple-minded ones—went into battle with the cry "For the Fatherland! For Stalin!" on their lips.

During the dreadful purges of the 1930's and the renewed terror of the postwar period, even the most convinced believers in Stalin must have undergone a crisis of faith. It requires no great stretch of the imagination to picture men like our poet in the dilemma of a Job—bewildered and outraged by a sense of injustice, yet anxious, through an act of faith, to find some reason in what was taking place around them. Apart from everything else, they had personal motives for wanting to do so: there was so much for them to lose by saying No to Stalin's Russia. They were old enough to have made sacrifices in the cause of the Revolution during its early years, and to have played a part in the establishment of Stalin's power; many were personally implicated in events that were distasteful to them and troubled their consciences ("I have judged people. . ."); and, finally, they had behind them a lifelong commitment to the ideology of Marxism. A man's integrity and self-esteem, his whole previous person, were at stake in rejecting Stalin and his works.

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THE TYPE OF mentality I am trying to describe, with its tendency to assert faith through an act of will and to interpret disturbing contradictions in their most hopeful light, is well represented in *The Trial Begins.* The grandmother in the story, Ekaterina Petrovna, is an old Bolshevik, older than our poet, but like him an intellectual. We gather from what she tells her grandson, Seryozha, that she was once imprisoned by the Tsarist authorities for revolutionary activities. Seryozha has begun to notice contradictions between Soviet ideology and Soviet reality, and he frequently embarrasses his elders by speaking out about things that trouble him. Seryozha says of the kind of Soviet fiction that varnishes reality: "I know these books, I've read them. They're nothing but model window-dressing—all lies." Ekaterina Petrovna has just been defending a novel about a collective farm on the ground that, though badly writ-

[4] Vsevolod Kochetov, *Bratia Ershovy,* Lenizdat, Moscow, 1958.

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ten, it depicts a model farm as an example for other farms to follow. The point is that Ekaterina Petrovna is capable of recognizing the esthetic weaknesses and falseness of the book, but has made a choice of priorities which—temporarily, she would say—places the immediate aims of social and economic progress above all other values. For many Russian intellectuals, we can well imagine, this involved a willful amputation of a vital part of their consciousness. Ekaterina Petrovna says something like this to Seryozha: "You think I'm old and haven't got eyes in my head. Well, I dare say I see more things wrong than you do. But don't you understand, Seryozha, you must have faith, you simply must believe . . . . The whole of our life is devoted to this. It's—our aim. . . ."

We can be sure that our anonymous poet once reconciled himself to reality by very much the same sort of rationalization. Today, however, all the flames of faith are burned out in him. Still, one hope desperately refuses to be extinguished—one hope, he says, keeps him working and prevents him from succumbing altogether to disillusionment and bitterness. For me, the most significant poem in the group is the one beginning, "I am building on sand. . . " Here, the hope that characteristically sustains not only its author but most critically-thinking Russian intellectuals in their middle years or older is expressed in the line: "But I am faithful to the construction program. . . ."

Let me illustrate the meaning of this last line. One evening I was standing on the crest of the Lenin Hills with a philosophy teacher in his late thirties, who was in from the provinces to do advanced work at Moscow University. We had walked from the university along the spacious tree-lined promenade which leads to the top of a tall bluff overlooking the Moscow River. There, with the river flowing far below, we could see the whole of Moscow laid out before us, illuminated and sparkling in the night. Along the way we had been arguing, playing our tiny roles in the great contemporary dialogue between East and West. Russians were incomparably freer now than before, my companion said; life, in general, was much better, and he was confident it would continue to improve still more. How could he be sure? I asked; what guarantees did he have, and didn't he realize that without free political institutions, a free press, and civil liberties, all the gains made since Stalin's death might be wiped out by the party if it decided this was necessary? What was to prevent a repetition of the bloody purges of the 1930's if the party felt its power threatened or if it spawned some new maniac like Stalin? My friend did not seem to regard these as real possibilities; nevertheless, unknowingly, I had touched him in a sensitive spot. His own father, he told me, had been arrested during the *yezhovshchina* and had spent many years in exile, but despite that had never lost "faith." Nor had he himself and other Russians lost faith, he added; and then, to support this last contention, he pointed with a triumphant gesture toward the new residential construction sites on Lenin Prospekt and beyond to the gigantic and burgeoning new southwest quarter of Moscow, with its miles of gargantuan apartment houses, each seven stories high and several city blocks long. This was his faith and his guarantee of the future.

IF THERE STILL are Russian intellectuals today who find it possible to look back on Stalin as a modern Peter the Great, a ruler of monstrous iniquities but one to whom they are grateful for forcing Russia along the road to modernity; and if these intellectuals can and do find things in their society that are worthy of assent, it is because they, like our poet, are absorbed—mesmerized, I should say—by a compelling vision of their country's economic future.

Nevertheless, I met many intellectuals in their thirties and older whose political disaffection was fierce—unmodulated by any such vision. They were consumed by bitterness, and while they believed that, with time, material standards of life would improve, perhaps even radically, they were more concerned about the future of political and intellectual freedom, and not hopeful about it. The younger intellectuals, especially, seem to live exclusively in a world of present needs: they want, right *now*, to be free and modern in their style of life and dress as well as in their art and literature, and they are impatient with talk about the necessity of present sacrifices for the sake of future goals. But the majority of adult intellectuals, including those who are opposed in principle to the regime, give their primary allegiance to the "construction program" and are willing to restrain their criticisms of the regime because they believe that it shares this allegiance.

I think that despite all we have learned in recent years about the importance of economic development for the intellectuals in underdeveloped countries and how it tends—to our dismay—to overshadow issues of political, individual, and intellectual freedom, it is still difficult for us to appreciate the problem vividly enough, in all its ramifications. What disturbs Russian intellectuals is not only that they and their countrymen still suffer material hardship, though this is of course most important; it is also the special tone which their country's relative backwardness gives to other aspects of life.

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My first insight into this problem came from a person who was not an intellectual. Shortly after my arrival in Moscow, I was lucky enough to run into one of those talkative Russian taxi drivers I had read about. He seized the occasion of having a foreign fare to get what was bothering him off his chest, and he did so simply and vehemently, but with an intelligence and incisiveness that simple people seem to acquire in hard life conditions. "We work, and we work, and we work —and for what? For nothing!" he said. "For forty-two years 'they' have been promising us a better life, and we have nothing to show for it. People are still starving in the villages—I've been there and I know—while *they* [he spoke with special vehemence] live like kings, in palaces." [5] He complained that workers' children rarely get higher education and that nearly all the students at universities and institutes were sons and daughters of "party workers, intellectuals, writers and television people."

I told him I had heard that Jews were disliked in the Soviet Union, and asked if this was true. Yes, he replied, Russians hate the Jews because Jews don't want to work with their hands, because they are all educated and shrewd, and if one gets a good job somewhere, he drags all his Jewish friends in. He thought for a moment and then added, "But, you know, the reason we hate Jews is because life is so hard. And we don't hate just Jews, we hate one another. If life were better for all of us, we wouldn't care that they had good jobs."

I thought that this was a rather sophisticated explanation, at least of popular anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union. (I remembered that anti-Semitism had been most virulent in the United States during the Great Depression.) During the months that followed, I noticed many things—the rudeness of salesgirls, waitresses and bus conductors; the easily aroused irritability of people generally, and the frequent altercations between them in stores, restaurants, and on the street; an old *dvornik* deliberately sweeping street dust onto two young girls who had the temerity to expect that he would stop his work long enough to let them pass by. As these observations accumulated, they grew into a conviction about a certain quality of Soviet life, and I found myself recalling the taxi driver's words: "We hate one another."

"Hate" is perhaps too strong a word to characterize the tension in Soviet life that explodes often enough to make the foreigner take notice. I asked some of my Russian friends, who had the economic development complex I have been describing, how they accounted for this tension, and they would come up with several answers: the constant waiting in queues that Soviet shoppers have to put up with; the frequent shortages of consumer goods which compel them to waste time going from store to store in search of what they are after; low pay and the tightness of the average Soviet citizen's budget; and, most of all, the housing shortage.

I ALREADY had an idea of the housing problem before I went to the Soviet Union; American newspapers described it as "appalling." But to understand how unspeakably bad conditions actually are, one has to see them with one's own eyes and measure them in terms of their social consequences—a total lack of privacy, separated families, an astronomical divorce rate and a low birth rate, widespread drunkenness, and national irascibility. The typical setup is the communal apartment consisting of four or more separate rooms with a common kitchen and common bathroom, each of the rooms usually occupied by one family, sometimes with odd relatives thrown in. The Russian housewife starts the day waiting her turn to use the kitchen stove so that she can prepare breakfast, which she will carry back to the family's single room. Her husband starts his day waiting for the bathroom to be free. It is not exactly the kind of morning to put either in a friendly frame of mind for the rest of the day. But life at home in the evening is enough to drive one to drink. I've had the situation described to me vividly: the Russian *pater familias* gets home from work and sits down to relax after dinner; the children are playing at his feet and making a racket; his mother-in-law is sitting in the corner complaining about her rheumatism; his neighbor on the left, separated from him by a thin wall, is abusing his wife, while the neighbor on the right has his radio receiver turned up full blast, blaring forth the Soviet national anthem for all the world to hear. So, the hell with it, says *pater familias* and goes out for a couple of drinks. Small wonder that there is such a staggering amount of drunkenness in Soviet cities!

I knew of divorces which happened because husbands couldn't stand living in the same room with their in-laws, or because couples lived too long in separation—often in the same city—without being able to find a place to live together. One fellow whose wife left him over mother-in-law trouble wound up still living in the same room with his former mother-in-law because neither of them could find another.

[5] This is a peculiarly working-class view of the government and party leaders. To discontented workers they are "bandits," out only for their own personal gain. The oppositionist intelligentsia will attribute any number of vices to the leaders, but they seldom regard them as animated solely by venal motives.

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These are some of the social costs of economic backwardness. They are less easy to assess than the actual material privations, but they are equally important in shaping the political state of mind of the Russian intelligentsia. There are still other hidden costs. For many of my educated Russian friends, who knew that they were every bit as articulate and sophisticated as Western intellectuals, it was a humiliation that they could be invidiously distinguished from the latter by a suit of clothing. They experienced their country's poverty as a personal and national degradation, and so long as they saw hope of economic progress, they were willing to be incredibly patient in regard to other things.

BEFORE GOING TO the Soviet Union, I had expected to find the Soviet working class pacified by recent improvements in living standards, and the intelligentsia, on the contrary, the focal point of disaffection because of the continued pinch of restrictions on intellectual freedom. The situation turned out to be the reverse. In general, it was my most sophisticated friends who were willing to stand behind the government because they saw it as the only hope of moving forward economically, and who were ready to tolerate—and sometimes even justify—practices directly affecting themselves, such as censorship of literature, the prohibition of internal political criticism, and curbs on cultural exchange with the outside world. They felt that the Soviet Union could not yet afford democratic freedoms, that at the present time such freedoms would only invite disorders and probably revolution by the working class, which they thought was unhappy enough—with proper provocation—to raise the cry, *doloi kommunizm* (down with communism), and plunge the country back into chaos.[6] In the meantime, they themselves had agreed not to rock the boat, not to focus, by word or deed, the disaffections of the working class, so as to buy the time necessary for their country to develop a richer material life. The formula was: "We've had enough of idle talk and criticism. You have to have been born and to have grown up here to know what a peculiar Russian curse it is. We're so given to self-deprecation and admiration of the West. What we need is *work* and *efficiency!* When we have that, we'll become rich, and then we won't have to be afraid of comparison with the West, our borders will be opened, and freedom will come."

"Work," indeed, is the one subject on which even the most unorthodox Russian intellectuals agree with their government, the one subject about which they can speak sincerely and still give a foreigner the impression that he is listening to a lead article from *Pravda*. One evening I attended a reception held at a well-known Moscow institute for the entering freshman class. The director of the institute, a very sophisticated man with a reputation for liberalism and independence, gave an address, but all he had to say to his young protégés was about work, repeating words with which they had been assailed since first learning to read and to understand the spoken word. He began by speaking of the institute's scholarly traditions, of the great scholars who had worked there and the contributions they had made to the enlightenment and material well-being of the nation; he concluded by emphasizing the duty of the students to work conscientiously so that they, too, might make the contributions the nation required of them. It was the same old call to labor that has hounded Soviet citizens since the days of the Revolution; yet, as I listened to this man, I had the deep impression that his words were sincere, his enthusiasm genuine, and his belief in the saving power of work a first article of faith.

FOR DISILLUSIONED people, people with no other hope, work is often a last refuge, as it was for Chekhov's Uncle Vanya. Many Russians, when asked what they can do to change things in their country, will tell you that the only thing left for them is to work as hard and honestly as they can in their own occupations and hope that change will come about through more and more people doing the same thing. Yet, for Russians today, "work" does not as a rule have the pathetic significance that it did for Uncle Vanya. They do not work, as he did, to forget—because there was nothing else a man of conscience could do in a tired old empire strangling in sloth and social injustice. They work rather because they are drawn by a goal and a hope—the goal of forging, not their country's might and destiny, but simply its economic well-being, and the hope that this will bring ultimate freedom.

[6] Even people whose first commitment was to intellectual and political freedom, and not to economic development, did not welcome the prospect of a new working-class revolution. "The workers don't only hate 'them,' they also hate intellectuals. They think we're all living in ease, while they're living in poverty," said one intellectual friend who was opposed to the regime. Actually, only a small percentage of intellectuals live well—have their own apartments, for example—but workers generalize their envy and hatred towards all intellectuals. It is significant that the taxi driver I mentioned earlier believed that the universities and institutes were attended exclusively by the children of either party workers or "intellectuals, writers and television people." One sees frequent evidences of the smoldering antagonism the working class feels towards the intelligentsia. "Educated one," "*intelligent*," "bespectacled one," and even "student" are terms of abuse on the lips of workers.

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This brings me to another crucial aspect of the problem of economic development as it appears to Russian intellectuals. Khrushchev's celebrated remark, "We are getting richer, and when a person has more to eat, he gets more democratic," reflects a widely-held belief. It is a belief which, in different terms, is implicit in the poem, "Man." Russian intellectuals see freedom and material abundance as two sides of the same coin, and if many of them are willing to remain passive in the face of the oppressive features of their society today, it is because they are convinced that these features are fated to disappear with the arrival of an abundant tomorrow. The usual argument is that freedom will be unattainable as long as living standards are so low that they engender discontent to the point of threatening the party's position and making it unwilling to relax controls. In line with this, Russians argue that restrictions on intercourse with the West exist because official circles fear the effect that knowledge of Western material conditions and political life might have upon the Russian people. Rising living standards, they believe, will lift these barriers to the freedoms they are now denied. I often asked friends who argued this way how they could be sure the party would surrender its power monopoly, but beyond a vague confidence that it would somehow have to do so, I never got any satisfactory answers. It was my impression that they did not think too deeply about the question—that it is a bridge they will cross when they come to it. Meanwhile, they are absorbed in the problem of getting to a point where the bridge will at least be in sight.

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IN CONCLUSION, I should like to return to one last poem and to consider a question it raises. The poem is "Propaganda," and the question is: to what extent are the sentiments expressed in it typical of the attitude of Soviet citizens and, by extension, how successful has the official indoctrination program been in anesthetizing them to their political condition? To anyone who goes to the Soviet Union with even the smallest expectation of finding it a never-never land of thoroughly indoctrinated political robots, the experience of getting to know Russian intellectuals—and not only intellectuals, but intelligent, thinking Russians in whatever walk of life—will come as a big surprise. He will be astonished by their openmindedness and lack of dogmatism, by the way they have managed to keep their heads clear despite the concentrated effort of the most insidious, highly-saturating propaganda machine yet devised by any government. He will be overwhelmed by their eagerness to know about life in the West, touched by their humility about their ignorance of the outside world, and impressed by their sophisticated understanding of their own life. Of course, he will meet many Russians who exhibit all the qualities of mindlessness and stereotyped thinking that Soviet indoctrination is designed to inculcate. But he will be struck much more by the numbers of people who want to be free and know they are not, and who show an ironic disregard both for official dogma and for their leaders.

That is, of course, *if* he has an opportunity to know them genuinely and honestly. For this, two elementary rules have to be remembered: first, a Russian can never be expected to speak candidly with a foreigner in the presence of other Russians unless they are his trusted friends; second, no Russian speaking in an official capacity can be expected to risk his job or his freedom by revealing his private self. Often the same person who, in the presence of others, beleaguers you with hostile questions about unemployment in the United States, starving workers, and discrimination against the Negroes, will in private ask about these things simply and unprovocatively, because he wants to know the facts—sometimes, even, in a way that clearly conveys his own disbelief of the official propaganda.

Bearing this in mind, it is particularly important to avoid judging the attitudes of Russian intellectuals in general by what they may say as Soviet official representatives in group discussions with visiting foreign cultural delegations. For one thing, these representatives are often likely to be members of the despised Stalin generation—careerists, sycophants, intellectual mediocrities who rose to the top while those who were really talented and independent-minded were swept away in the purges. Yet even among these the rule is cynicism and ambition rather than stupidity, and what they say cannot be taken as expressing what they actually believe.

IT IS A WICKED FACT, but nevertheless a fact that whatever genuine intellectual life there is in the Soviet Union goes on beneath the surface, and that Russians, when they feel they have to, can lie (not only to foreigners, unfortunately, but also to one another) with an adroitness that comes from living so long under conditions of political and intellectual repression. After all, lying—in one way or another—not only is the daily work of Soviet writers, as our poet confesses; it is the business of every Soviet citizen who writes or speaks publicly, just as it is a necessary precaution of everyday life in a society where one can never be sure of one's neighbor.

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But when one succeeds in penetrating this protective screen, one soon discovers the plain and simple fact that the enormous official indoctrination effort has made surprisingly little indentation on the private attitudes and thinking of Russian intellectuals, and for that matter of intelligent Soviet citizens in general. Indeed, it is perhaps the least successful of all Soviet government enterprises. Chances are today that by the time a young Russian is of university age, he has already arrived at a fairly fundamental understanding of his political condition. A friend described the three ages of the New Soviet Man to me this way. Up to the age of 18, give or take a couple of years, he is apt to be an enthusiastic supporter of the regime, an active Pioneer or *komsomolets* thoroughly imbued with the ideals and ideology of Marxism-Leninism. Between 18 and 25, the process of independent thought sets in, and with it comes the high tide of disillusionment. (It is, significantly, among persons of this age group that what little organized opposition there is to the regime usually develops.) Finally, by the age of 25, most Russians have already become convinced that they are powerless to change things; or they are too afraid of the chaos that might result from trying to change them, and too concerned with keeping their families in food and clothing to do anything but settle back into the "wait and see" attitude that is typical of thinking people in the Soviet Union.

Obviously, there are Russians who never outgrow their childhood naiveté and who go on believing to the end the official picture of the world. But the only educated adults I encountered who seemed to fit in this category either were persons with whom I had official contacts, and who may or may not have really believed what they said, or were individuals of no intelligence. Among uneducated Russians, one often encounters a species of cynicism which might be characterized as a belief in universal evil: life is bad in the Soviet Union, but it is no better anywhere else. Perhaps they would subscribe to a literal interpretation of our poet's words: "Everything is propaganda. The whole world is propaganda." But, for other Russians, these lines have a more limited meaning. They know that *their* world is propaganda, but they suspect there is a different world beyond.

Soviet Literature—An Inside View

Art is not afraid of dictatorship, severity, repressions, or even conservatism and clichés. When necessary, art can be narrowly religious, dumbly governmental, devoid of individuality—and yet good. We go into esthetic raptures over the stereotypes of Egyptian art, Russian icons and folklore. Art is elastic enough to fit into any bed of Procrustes that history presents to it. But there is one thing it cannot stand: eclecticism.

Our misfortune is that we are convinced socialist realists but not convinced enough. Submitting to its cruel rules, we are yet afraid to follow to the end the road that we ourselves have chosen. No doubt, if we were less educated, it would be easier for us to attain the integrity that is indispensable to a writer. But we went to school, read all kinds of books, and learned only too well that there were great writers before us—Balzac, Maupassant, Tolstoy and, yes, what's his name? —Chekhov. This is what has undone us. We wanted to become famous and to write like Chekhov. This unnatural liaison produced monsters.

It is impossible, without falling into parody, to produce a positive hero in the style of full socialist realism and yet make him into a psychological portrait. In this way, we will get neither psychology nor hero . . . .

. . . the writing of so many other writers is in a critical state right now precisely because, in spite of the classicistic nature of our art, they still consider it realism. They do it because they base their judgments on the literary criticism of the 19th century, which is farthest away from us and most foreign to us. Instead of following the road of conventional forms, pure fantasy and imagination which the great religious cultures always took, they try to compromise. They lie, they maneuver and they try to combine the uncombinable: the positive hero, who logically tends towards the pattern, the allegory—and the psychological analysis of character; elevated style, declamation—and prosaic descriptions of ordinary life; a high ideal—and truthful representation of life.

The result is a loathsome literary salad. The characters torment themselves not quite like Dostoevsky's, are mournful not quite like Chekhov's, found their happy families not quite like Tolstoy's, and, suddenly becoming aware of the time they are living in, scream at the reader the copybook slogans which they read in Soviet newspapers, like "Long live world peace!" or "Down with the Warmongers!" This is neither classicism nor realism. It is a half-classicist half-art, which is none too socialist and altogether not realism.

—From "On Socialist Realism," by an anonymous Russian writer, published in *Dissent* (New York), Winter 1960.

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Communist Morality and Soviet Youth

By Peter H. Juviler

AMONG SEVERAL CLUES to the beliefs and values of young people in the USSR, one of importance is their attitude toward "Communist morality"—the official ethic prescribed by the regime. The degree of adherence or non-adherence to this code is both a more sensitive and a more realistic touchstone of youth's outlook than the issue of its loyalty or disloyalty, sometimes raised in discussions. Eschewing the subject of disaffection, the present paper attempts to assess the values of Soviet urban youth against the yardstick of the major canons of "Communist morality." The writer lays no claim to sociological expertise, still less to statistical evidence, in support of his observations: these are simply personal impressions gathered in the course of three visits to Russia between 1955 and 1960, and especially during a year of study at Moscow University in 1958-59.

Except for the political activists, young people seem to be much less preoccupied with their moral values than is the regime. When asked to define "Communist morality," they would cite examples demonstrating truthfulness, respect for women, generosity towards one's fellows. (An instance of the latter was one acquaintance's remark: "When you [Americans] take the metro, each of you buys his own ticket; with us, the first Soviet student to reach the ticket window buys for everybody in his group.") While the party theoreticians would not quarrel with such values in "comradely relations," the moral code they have elaborated demands a collectivist spirit that is much broader in scope and more political and social in orientation.

The party philosophers reject, at the start, any notion of immutable ethical principles. Morality is the morality of the ruling order in any given epoch. Within this framework, Communist morality is distinguished by two major components, both adapted from Marxian theory but also reflecting other philosophical and historical influences, including the Russian past. On one hand, there is the strain of political teleology, derived not only from Marx but from such revolutionaries as Bakunin in Russia, who taught that "everything that allows the triumph of the revolution is moral, and everything that stands in its way is immoral." [1] A half century later, Lenin provided a similar formulation, by "repudiating all morality that is taken out of . . . class concepts" and declaring that "our morality is entirely subordinated to the interests of the class struggle."

The second major component of Communist morality is its stress on identification with the collective, with the needs of society as a whole. A recent reflection of this stress is provided in the draft program of a course on Fundamentals of Marxist Ethics, proposed for use in higher schools, in which the "basic problem of ethics" is defined as the need to "harmonize personal interests with the interests of society." [2] By contrast, "bourgeois morality" is said to rest on the basic principle of selfish, "antihumanitarian" and "antisocial" individualism.[3] Social collectivism has, of course, venerable antecedents in prerevolutionary socialist, Slavophil and nihilist thought, as well as in the old communal practices of peasant households.

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[1] Quoted from the *Revolutionary Catechism* attributed to Bakunin. See Franco Venturi, *Roots of Revolution,* translated by Francis Haskell, A. Knopf, New York, and Weidenfield and Nicolson, London, 1960, p. 366.

[2] The draft program is published and discussed in *Voprosy marksistskoi-leninskoi etiki,* Institute of Philosophy, Academy of Sciences of the USSR, Gospolitizdat, Moscow, 1960, p. 249.

[3] See, *e.g.,* A. Shiskin, *Osnovy kommunisticheskoi morali,* Gospolitizdat, 1955, pp. 95-99.

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While the Soviet regime has always used slogans calling for devotion to the common cause, its current campaign to spur popular effort toward the final "full-scale building of communism" has led to a renewed stress on Communist morality as a requisite of good citizenship. The apparent theory is that the more citizens believe and live by the self-denying moral code of civic duty as defined by the party, the more effectively they will execute the economic plans and general line of the regime. Translated into specific demands, the code requires that citizens be not only skilled in their work but imbued with the "moral qualities of active builders of communism." They must be "simple" and "modest" without inner reservation, true collectivists immune to bourgeois individualism in the form of "survivals of the past" or pernicious infiltrations from the decadent West. In sum, the ideal citizen is distinguished by his "devotion to communism" and "Soviet patriotism," his "sense of social duty," his "love of labor for the good of society," his honor and truthfulness," his "adherence to rules of socialist conduct." [4]

The Ideal and the Real

Soviet young people are a primary target of the regime's campaign for "Communist morality." The fact that the image of the moral man is an idealized stereotype—a model toward which young people are supposed to strive—is what makes it a useful measuring-rod of actual attitudes of Soviet youth. Thus the urban youths with whom the writer came into contact can be separated roughly into types, depending on how they reacted or lived up to the ideal. These can be labeled: 1) the "political activists"—a small but zealous core of party-line youths who will probably feed into the future political elite, and who may be variously called "overseers," "schoolmen," and "populists" (to be discussed further); 2) the "ambitious careerists"—a large group of people for whom the wish to "get ahead" outweighs any possible ideological qualms; some join the party but not usually in positions of leadership; 3) the "explorers"—a minority who are gifted scientifically, academically or artistically, who are not politically-minded, but who may find their professional pursuits leading them beyond the pale of official approval; 4) the "westerners"—another and still smaller minority whose dissatisfaction with the regime's restrictions on foreign influences goes beyond the general interest of urban youth in foreign jazz records, more travel abroad, foreign clothes, *etc.*; in private, this group will express disillusionment with the Soviet system and a desire for political evolution toward "bourgeois democracy" through a multi-party system; 5) the "drifters"—those young people, whether students or simple workers, privileged or poor, who have little enthusiasm for work or studies or any "common cause," who simply drift along in listless conformity; 6) finally, the "rejectors"—those who blatantly show their contempt for the prescribed moral code, including playboys, prostitutes, speculators, and "hooligans." [5]

The above categorization is necessarily somewhat arbitrary. In reality, types overlap: an ambitious young engineer or student may be found on the street "speculating" for foreign currency or clothes; there are "westerners" among the "explorers," and so on. It is worth noting that the Soviet party and press lump the more non-conformist of all the types described—for example, jazz enthusiasts, *avant-garde* poets, *stiliagi* (the Soviet equivalent of "teddy boys")—together with the last category of "negative" elements so as to tar them with the same brush. Perhaps the best cross-section of youth attitudes can be obtained, then, by turning to the specific precepts of the moral code heretofore defined, to see how they are viewed by these various elements of the youth population.

"Devotion to Communism" and Country

Considering the youth as a whole, it is fair to say that the demand for "devotion to communism" rates rather low on its scale of values, certainly far lower than the call for "Soviet patriotism," which in most young people is spontaneous and strong. On the academic side, there is little interest among students in the study of Marxist philosophy, political economy, or the history of the Soviet Communist Party. While basic courses on ideology are mandatory, few students pursue studies beyond the required minimum. Even the "activists" who show enthusiasm for "the cause" cannot be said to know their ideology well. Advanced knowledge of the theory is limited to the "schoolmen" specifically charged by the party with indoctrination duties, to philosophy majors, and to some of the intellectually-inclined students who fall in either the "explorer" or the "westerner" categories.

[4] Khrushchev's report to the 21st CPSU Congress (*Vneocheredoi XXI Sezd . . .*), Gospolitizdat, Moscow, 1959, p. 55. See also "Pochetnaya zadacha vysshei shkoly," *Pravda,* Nov. 27, 1960.

[5] For interesting studies on attitudes of Soviet youth, see "The Russian Intelligentsia," *Daedalus* (Cambridge, Mass.), Summer 1960, especially the article by David Burg; and Tim Callaghan, "Studying the Students," *Soviet Survey* (London), July-September 1960, pp. 12-19.

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Attempts at ideological indoctrination extend beyond the classroom to all phases of activity. Inculcating "devotion to communism" and "Communist morality" in this broader sense is the primary task of the Communist Youth Organization. But while the Komsomol has a huge membership, most youths join out of token conformity or to further their careers. At Moscow University, for example, 95 percent of the students are members of Komsomol, but it is hardly considered a dynamic source of inspiration. Many students resent its organized indoctrination and "watchdog" activities, and consider its hard core of activists to be "ignorant" (*serye*) fools, opportunists or busybodies.

There are several apparent reasons for these attitudes. In the first place, ideological indoctrination is usually dry and unimaginative, a fact that is frankly admitted and deplored by the authorities. A recent article in *Pravda* criticized university lectures on ideology as being "unrelated to current events and to practical problems of Communist construction," dull and pedantic, conducive to students' "learning by rote textbook formulas only in order to pass the examination. . . ."[6] The present writer recalls a lecture on ideology in one of Moscow University's large auditoriums: with the interesting exception of the Chinese students, the audience was openly inattentive—in fact, the buzz of conversation made nearly inaudible the drone of the bespectacled older "schoolman" on the rostrum, a party propagandist sent in to help prepare the students for state examinations on Marxism-Leninism.

A more basic factor explaining this coolness to dogma are the times of relative normalcy that have come to Russia after decades of *Sturm und Drang*. One graduate scholar old enough to remember the last years of Stalinism observed: "Under Stalin everything was larger than human scale—the leader, the buildings, the terror. Things have resumed human proportions. We seem to have left an awful age behind." Those a little younger than he—this year's graduating class at the universities—remember little in detail. They were six at the end of the "Great Patriotic War," were just finishing the seventh grade the year that Stalin died, and passed into adulthood at the climax of the "thaw." In today's more normal atmosphere, it is only natural that personal problems and preoccupations loom larger for them than vicarious memories of the revolutionary past. This situation is no mere conjecture on the part of the writer; for some years now, the regime has been concerned about the gap between generations. Khrushchev himself has been quoted as complaining, in his report to the 21st Congress of the CPSU, that "our younger generation has not passed through that great school of life and struggle which fell to the lot of the older generation. . . ." The premier's statement was recently referred to by a party "schoolman" in asserting the need for a more thorough indoctrination of youth and specifically for the aforementioned university course on ethics; the speaker commented on his own:

[Young people] live in peaceful times, at a stage in our country's growth when people have overcome the difficulties and privations accompanying the Civil War, socialist construction, the Great Patriotic War. . . . It is therefore very important that our younger generation . . . be inculcated with the revolutionary traditions of our party, our working class.[7]

Another factor influencing indifference to ideology are the inconveniences and discomforts of Soviet life, though in this respect reactions are mixed, ranging from bitterness through good-natured skepticism to hope for a better future. While most urban youths whom the writer met blamed presnt shortages on the war, not a few—including people from various backgrounds—attributed them to the policies of the regime. The good-natured approach to conditions is epitomized by a story which was circulating in Moscow—one which incidentally represents the limits of propriety for story-telling in groups where both sexes are present. The story goes:

Two men and a woman are stranded on a desert island. What do they do to solve an obvious problem?—well, it depends on their nationality. If they are French, they set up a *ménage-à-trois*. If they are Spanish, the men fight a duel. If they are English, the men toss for it, and the loser jumps into the sea saying "you win, old chap." If they are American, they look for other shipwrecked men to whom to sell their woman. But if they are Russian—they stand in line.

A shorter story makes a similar point: "Adam and Eve must have been Russians, because when they had no clothes and only an apple between them, they were happy."

The regime is blamed less for material shortages than for the Russian people's relative isolation from the outside world, and the hope is constantly voiced that the present trend toward increased contacts will continue. Yet these contacts in themselves lead to further questioning. Two years after the event, for example, the Communist-sponsored Youth Festival of 1957 held in Moscow was still an object of fond recall among Soviet youths, who were affected both by superficial impres-

[6] *Pravda*, Nov. 27, 1960.

[7] *Voprosy marksistskoi-leninskoi etiki, supra*, p. 63.

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sions—pretty foreign students, rock and roll, clothes, *etc.*—and also by the deeper insights they got into life abroad. Young people accept official Soviet press reports of such events only in the most general way.

Interestingly, some young people compare Soviet conditions not only with what they know of contemporary life abroad, but with what they know of the Russian past. More than one student of the writer's acquaintance, whether expressing his dissatisfaction with the Soviet way of life, or his hope for the better, related his views to his reading of 19th-century Russian literature, comparing its styles, tastes and heroes with those of the present.

ON THE OTHER SIDE of the coin, if most youths show little interest or sense of commitment toward dogma, ideological indoctrination nevertheless does leave its imprint on their values. There is a widespread belief that socialism is basically "good," while capitalism is "bad" because it means *ipso facto* exploitation of the people. Patriotism runs deep and is naturally associated to a large extent with Soviet achievement. Lenin is revered by most as a great and good leader; from school days they have learned such songs as "Lenin is Always with Us." Many youths sport badges on their lapels (Russians are incorrigible badge-wearers) showing the image of Lenin the man, and even of Lenin the infant in curly locks. Soviet foreign policy is generally believed to stand for "peace." America's image is compounded of jazz, cars, and skyscrapers on the one hand, unemployment and discrimination on the other—though there are always the few who will ask: "If the United States is as bad as they say, then why are we supposed to catch up with it?"

There may be skepticism over the roseate propaganda circulated describing the future "communism," and in fact the official line gives rise to jokes (*e.g.*—"Our leaders say communism is on the horizon, but the definition of horizon is something which, as you approach it, remains the same distance away"). At the same time, there are many who believe that "communism" in a practical sense is gradually achieving the good life, the tangible signs of which they see increasing daily, at least in the larger cities.

A word must also be said about the minority of "activists" among youth, who, if they have any reservations about party dogma, certainly do not show it. At the universities, the activists fall into three groups, defined by this writer as the "schoolmen," the "overseers," and "the populists." The "schoolmen," mentioned before, are those charged with the task of indoctrination in the academic sense. The "overseers" serve as members of faculty-Komsomol committees, group or floor monitors, leaders of "sanitary commissions" (clean-up squads), watchdogs at social functions such as college dances (to keep a curb on *"rok,"* etc.), and—less effectively, as we shall see—as chaperones in the mixed dormitories. The "overseer" activists are perhaps the most resented because their power is real, and any reprimands they issue go on students' records, potentially affecting job assignments upon graduation.

The "populists" constitute a relatively small group among the activists who are less affected by the political teleology of the official ethic than by its other basic strain, the cult of social service. One such "populist" was Valya, a vertible *narodnik* with Komsomol badge, who in contrast to other activists was respected and well-liked. Valya gave every moment off from her studies in law and juvenile delinquency to agitational and cultural work among factory and other laborers. Her motivation?—"My mother was a cleaning woman. I am graduating from Moscow University. Now it is my duty to help people like her." Valya's personal life generally took second place to her work: for example, she was married three days before she casually mentioned the fact to an acquaintance.

"Love of Labor"

Valya's exceptional example touches on the second basic criterion of Communist morality—"love of labor for the good of society." In expounding on this theme, Soviet theoreticians often supplement Communist slogans on the nobility of selfless labor with invocations of collectivist ideology from the Russian past. In a lengthy dissertation on morality, for instance, the theorist Shishkin made reference to the 19th-century nihilist, Chernyshevsky, quoting his view on the benefit of work for the common good and his repudiation of the individualist ethic as "the fussy bustle of isolated individuals with narrow personal cares about their pockets, their bellies, or their amusements." [8] Shishkin went on to portray happiness as "meaningless without the happiness of [all] the people," (or the collective), in a vein reminiscent of Kovalevsky's lyrical characterizations of the 19th-century commune peasants (who purportedly enjoyed "the great blessing of being unconscious of the need for securing individual happiness . . . [through] the pursuit of egotistic ends").[9]

[8] Shishkin, *op. cit.*, pp. 98, 146.

[9] Maxime Kovalevsky, *Modern Customs and Ancient Laws of Russia,* David Nutt, London, 1891, p. 61.

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The official ethic notwithstanding, it is clear that the average Soviet citizen—whatever the degree of his ideological enthusiasm and/or patriotism—is influenced in his work attitudes and endeavors by material conditions, incentives and rewards. It may be true, as the Communist Party has proclaimed, that "the cult of work reigns supreme" in the Soviet Union [10]—but this characteristic *per se* has also been attributed to the United States. If there is a great difference in the officially (or socially) approved goals of hard work in the two countries, the actual attitudes of the people are not as far apart as the Soviet ethic would have it.

Among the upper school population, attitudes toward the obligations and rewards of work are observable from three aspects—in school-work, in the "socially useful work" performed outside the classroom, and in the career aims of students. Insofar as studies are concerned, it seems fair to say that the "cult of work" reigns a little more "supreme" among Soviet students than among their American counterparts. Yet Soviet schools certainly are not devoid of the problems of students' trying to get by with a minimum of work, cheating, and cutting classes. The Moscow University newspaper reported, for example, that undergraduates in the Geography Faculty (roughly 1,000 students) cut 6,000 hours of classes in 1958, though officially allowed no cuts (probably the figure was larger since group monitors traditionally "cover up" for friends).[11] Another report, concerning the Physics Faculty, complained of students' wandering attention in class:

The large auditorium of the Physics Faculty is filled to overflowing. . . . The professor is absorbed in his lecture. There is a stir among the girls in the fourth row. Open notebooks lie in front of them, but they take down not a word of the lecture. Girl students . . . are enthusiastically discussing new spring fashions. A girl in a blue blouse carefully pulls a fashion magazine out of her bookcase. . . . When the bell rings they cannot even remember the subject of the lecture.[12]

Probably the girls had stopped at one of the book kiosks in the building on their way to class and found an East German or Czech fashion journal on sale. (Interest in such journals runs high, and some girls try to make copies of the fashions illustrated.) From the regime's point of view, these students would fall in the category of frivolous "drifters."

The current school reforms are aimed at reducing the numbers of drifters, shirkers, or otherwise unreliable youth by stiffening entrance and performance criteria in various educational specialties and by requiring work experience along with studies. Such work is assigned both on and off campus, the latter for periods of time during the school year and during the summer. Official stress is laid on the "socially useful" qualities of work assignments, and their role in educating young people to respect labor. At the same time, the work performed is of considerable economic benefit to the state. While some student workers—*e.g.*, engineering apprentices serving in skilled labor slots—earn regular wages and salaries, many others are recompensed only with their upkeep and their usual student stipends. (Soviet students, it might be pointed out, get their tuition free and in addition are paid small stipends for living expenses, provided they are not in trouble over poor grades or conduct. Stipends average 29 to 45 rubles a month, with 25 percent bonuses for excellent grades; a few honorary stipends range up to 80 rubles a month. Since food expenses alone run to 30 rubles a month for a modest diet, not counting other costs such as clothing, transportation, minimal dorm fees, *etc.*, most students require financial help from home.)

One of the most publicized work projects to which students have been assigned is the development of the "virgin lands." In 1958, 2,500 students from Moscow University alone—about one-sixth of the day-student body—spent two-and-a-half months doing agricultural work in the virgin lands of Kazakhstan, remaining through six weeks of the fall semester.[13] Student attitudes toward such summer work vary: some complain and try to get out of the work if possible; more view it as something simply to be accepted; still others feel that the experience will be interesting and will "look good" on their records, while the activists are predictably enthusiastic.

On the campus proper, there has been an increased emphasis since 1959 on the organization of unpaid student labor for certain "self-service" tasks—the cleaning of school buildings, snow-clearing, and other maintenance chores. In the writer's own dormitory, attempts to spur student cooperation in clean-up duties took the form of "socialist competitions" conducted between different floors and a campaign for a "Month of Health," during which students were urged to "take an active part in the struggle for health and cleanliness, keep rooms clean, dust ceilings," *etc.* As in the case of the more important off-campus work, students by and large accepted this self-service regimen as part of the order of things.

Students' concern over their future careers builds to a climax in the spring of their senior (fifth) year, when

[10] *Voprosy marksistskoi-leninskoi etiki,* p. 15.
[11] *Moskovski universitet,* May 21, 1959.
[12] *Ibid.,* April 9, 1959.
[13] *Ibid.,* Sept. 18, Dec. 4, 1958.

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they reach the most important academic moment of their university days—job assignment. Assignments are crucial, since the students are under obligation to work for three years wherever they are sent by the state job commission. Those sent to remote localities—and they are many—may find that it takes much longer than three years to make their way back to more comfortable and congenial surroundings. Competing values—on the one hand, the personal desire for a job in a good location with good pay and prestige potential, and on the other, the moral obligation to work where sent for the common good—are evidenced by many students while awaiting assignments. In most, human nature wins the victory over "Communist morality," though the great majority accept their assignments without protest. A few "individualists" do reject the job commission's decision. There have been rumors of dire consequences, but in cases known to this writer the only penalty was loss of the student's stipend for a month's vacation after graduation and of the travel allowance to the new place of work, plus the need to find his own work (typically, through *sviazy*—"connections.") The official attitude toward such violators of "Communist morality" is one of harsh contempt:

Sometimes someone among the graduates of the higher school, scorning the interests of society, refuses to go to work in rural localities, or in distant regions of the country where specialists are particularly needed. A person who has deeply and not just formally internalized party ideas and policy cannot be an individualist, a philistine.[14]

Perhaps the typical attitude of the upper school youth, toward his job and his future as well as toward other aspects of current Soviet life, is summed up in the following comments of a senior, made to this writer:

I should like to be sent to work in the western part of the country. Moscow or Leningrad would be perfect, but since I don't live there, I probably could never get a *propiska* [police residence permit] for either of them. Some of our western cities are just like pictures of Western Europe that I have seen. But looking at pictures is as close as I will ever get—you have to be lucky or pretty high up to travel to the West. We are young, my girl and I, but life goes fast—what will we have seen? . . . Mind you, I love this country. It's just that life gets so boring sometimes. One feels so cut off from the world.

What sort of work do I want? Please, not as a teacher. I did not go to the university to become a teacher. But many of us in my specialty will be, you know. Frankly, although teachers get respect, I would like a better-paying job, and one with more possibilities for advancement and prestige, such as in research or in government work.

Will I be a party member? Why not? It's a good club, a lot of able people join, and it's good for one's career.

My other concerns? An apartment is one. Soon my girl and I will be married, and we could count on a place of our own in four years, if I get the job I want. Then we would send for my mother and start the children. Two will do us fine. Where would we put more?

When I remarked that this personal planning and concern for his own future seemed something quite different from the ideal of selfless service, and asked him whether his country's needs didn't come first, he replied:

I am proud of my country and glad to help it, and my wife will of course do her bit too, not just sit at home. We are no shirkers. But we want to work under civilized conditions. . . .

In short, while service to the country—particularly in the sense of contributing to the achievement of a better life—is important to many young people, individual goals and material incentives are also a crucial factor in their make-up. It is interesting that in looking at their Chinese fellow-students, they exclaim with respect if not close feelings, *"Those* are the real lovers of labor. Perhaps we were like that 30 years ago."

"Honesty and Truthfulness"

The demand for "truthfulness" as a requisite of Communist morality constitutes an irony that is not lost upon Soviet citizens. Most are aware that truth is measured by a double standard, that the party in effect says "you must tell us the truth about your doings, but you must not question our truth in matters of principle and policy." Many students and young professionals, as well as less-educated but thinking citizens, must make a continual adjustment between the party's view of the truth and their own observations. The problem of this reconciliation has been treated with increasing frequency in recent Soviet literature. An example is the disquiet of the young Communist Shchukin in Yashin's *Levers:* "But what about the truth?," he asked, when party-line distortions of reality troubled him. A fellow cell-member could only answer: "The truth will have its day. It will reach even us, brother, like a thunderclap."

Party enthusiasts fall back, with respect to this issue, on the argument that "the end justifies the means." An activist "overseer" of my acquaintance accepted the double standard of truth as normal and necessary. He conceded that the press printed half-truths—for example, in its propaganda about the United States—but insisted that they were necessary in the building of communism. Half-truths were justified if they kept society unified and moving in the right direction.

[14] *Pravda,* Nov. 27, 1960.

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Other citizens are not so sanguine. Special problems of conflict arise for those whom the writer has called "explorers" in various intellectual pursuits. Among them, scientists are in general the most fortunate in that they deal with hard facts and suffer minimal party interference. In the social sciences there are more frequent conflicts between professional judgments of "truth" and official demands for an adaptation to ideology or the current party line. The situation is said to be much better, however, than it was under Stalin. As one social scientist put it to me:

Then, when we wrote on developments in our field in bourgeois society, we simply railed at them. Now we must document our criticisms. In reading Soviet studies, skip the interpretations, introductions and conclusions, and at least you get facts. Then you may draw your own conclusions. You learn what to pass over.

For young creative artists among the explorers, a world of the arts exists, at least in Moscow and Leningrad, where canons of socialist realism may be forgotten. This art is not published or publicly exhibited, but it is an open secret among the intelligentsia. Non-conformist paintings are bought and sold, poetry and other literature is written and read privately. Young composers do not desist from efforts to write modern music, even though they know it is condemned as "decadent."

A moving defense of artistic truth—representing the views of many young people with whom this writer talked—was offered by the film star Samoilova at a meeting celebrating the 40th anniversary of the Komsomol. The spontaneity of her speech was especially striking, following as it did a stereotyped, woodenly-memorized tribute to the Komsomol by a woman activist. Somoilova took the opportunity to defend the starring role she had played in the film, "The Cranes are Flying." Party authorities, parroted by the Komsomol, had criticized the portrayal of the film's heroine, Veronika, who in a moment of weakness gave in to a seducer and thereby betrayed her lover at the front. Samoilova defended the characterization of Veronika, asserting that people should be shown as they are, not as they ought to be, that Veronika's was a human failing, part of the human scene. She added that human understanding and humanitarianism ought to be a lofty principle of Komsomol work.

"Socialist Conduct"

In the proposed college course on ethics, mentioned before, there will be a section on "rules of cultured behavior in socialist society." It expounds the solid virtues of "personal neatness, cleanliness, . . . politeness, tactfulness, respect for old people and for women." [15] Such behavior, along with much broader aspects of cultural self-development, is already fostered at the leading urban universities through programs of social and cultural activities that go far beyond the extracurricular facilities in the average school.

It is evident that the cultural interests developed in students at Moscow University, for example, are one of the factors that make it very hard for them to go out to the provinces in post-graduate job assignments. Rural life offers little stimulus after five years of exposure to evenings of theater, concerts or movies (at inexpensive prices); organized discussions on "trends in contemporary art," followed by heated *"disputy"* among young enthusiasts in the dormitories; sedate lessons in "approved" ballroom dances, along with exhibitions by the prize students; or lectures on "culture in everyday life" (covering latest trends in fashions or modern home furnishings), on "love and marriage," even on "how to use cosmetics" tastefully.

In such activities, there is a vague, shifting line between what constitutes desirable "cultured conduct" and what becomes "toadying to things foreign." While many of the leisure-time pursuits mentioned are university-sponsored, there is a good deal of grumbling heard from party-line moralists. The deputy secretary of the party committee at Moscow University devoted part of a long article on ideological training to the sort of dire warning typically sounded by such sources:

Nothing in ideological work is trivial. It must be noted therefore that sometimes alien influences penetrate into the midst of our youth by way of such things—at first glance harmless—as dances, clothes, "fashionable" jazz records, "works" of abstract art and so forth.[16]

Komsomol activists, frequently ignorant and bigoted, react with particular perturbation to foreign influence as if to works of the devil.

On the other hand, even some activists have been known to wear foreign-style attire and to show pleasure when it caused comment. Jazz combines have been formed in university faculties, and have played at faculty "evenings." The young "smart set" in Moscow, quietly behaved and nicely turned out, likes to dance at restaurants like the new "Budapest," where the band plays such American jazz classics as "When the Saints Go Marching In." Gerry Mulligan is attempted at Sochi. "Rock Around the Clock" has been heard emanating from the venerable Admiralty building, while a naval cadet stood

[15] *Voprosy marksistskoi-leninskoi etiki,* p. 255.
[16] *Moskovski universitet,* April 14, 1959.

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smiling at a window. The smaller dances held in dormitory lounges under the watchful eye of Komsomol monitors even feature selections from the Voice of America's "Music, USA," a highly popular and "unsubversive" program picked up and taped from short-wave sets, which students are allowed to have. How long and how far such trends will be permitted to develop is anybody's guess.

THERE IS another aspect of "socialist conduct" that is worth mentioning, concerning relations between the sexes. Whereas in American colleges, a good deal of public romancing is tolerated, sexual relations are socially taboo and rarely admitted. In Russia the reverse seems to be true: while public displays of affection are frowned upon, there are no social barriers against forming alliances, even within the walls of the university, so long as students are reasonably discreet. This may be a consequence of the chaos of war and other upheavals in the past, or of the down-to-earth, practical atmosphere of everyday living, or of the absence of religious strictures and influence in the schools—but whatever the reasons, many boys and girls take life and love straightforwardly, without guilt or regret.

A story that circulated around the university humorously reflects student attitudes. At a lecture on love and marriage, according to observers, a girl sent up a written note to the speaker worded somewhat as follows: "I am young and healthy and have normal desires. You, doctor, say it is harmful to wait too long, but also not good to have relations before marriage. What should I do?" Minutes later another note was passed up by a male student: "If the girl who asked that question will give me her room number, I will be glad to help her solve her problem."

The fact that most dormitories are mixed—at least at Moscow University—favors both marriages and extramarital relationships. Any dormitory has its wedded couples, who share small, single rooms, and its unwedded couples, who spend what time together they can, and often plan to marry before graduation so as to be assigned to work together. The girl cooks for her man in one of the dormitory kitchens and keeps his clothing in order. A casual visitor or an outsider meeting such a girl, whose tastes and manner are much less sophisticated than those of her European or American sisters, might come away with the misconception that here was a typically puritan Russian youngster. But at least among the university populace, the "puritan" attitude is not typical but atypical—even among those who, for example, might frown on cosmetics. On the other hand, there is general disapproval of "light-minded" girls who flit from man to man, risqué jokes in mixed company, or even women's smoking in public. The rule seems to be personal freedom combined with discretion.

The Prospects Ahead

To sum up, while the present paper has concentrated primarily on the university population in assessing youth attitudes, certain generalizations can be drawn at least with respect to urban youth. In the first place, Soviet young people are as diverse in type and character as any cross-cut of a population, and it should not be surprising that they demonstrate varying degrees of adherence or non-adherence to the official code of "Communist morality." It is clear, however, that only a minority of activists pay zealous attention, or at least loud lip service, to the demands of the code. Among the vast majority, "devotion to communism" is tempered by various other interests and competing values. While one factor explaining this situation is the sterility of ideological indoctrination, probably the basic cause is the state of relative normalcy that has come to the USSR, permitting points of friction between personal values and the Communist ethic to emerge in sharper relief. Among urban youth, several of the key points of conflict are: individual career goals *vs.* the obligation to work for the "common cause" wherever the citizen is assigned and needed; creative drives and personal views of artistic or scientific truth *vs.* the party's version of truth; curiosity about the outside world *vs.* the continued relative isolation of the Soviet Union, imposed to "protect" citizens from "decadent bourgeois" ideology and morality. Among certain groups of young people, there are additional problems of conflicting interest: for example the small minority of "westerners" must cope with their aspirations for multiparty democracy *vs.* the reality of one-party rule; "nonconformists" of various leanings struggle with their desire for self-chosen (often romantic) paths to personal happiness *vs.* the proprieties of the *modus vivendi* prescribed by the regime; youths in the border republics sometimes face a special conflict of pride in their own nationality *vs.* the demand for "Soviet patriotism" and "socialist internationalism."

Yet whatever the degree of friction or discontent, it would be absurd to equate it with open disaffection. If young people are not deeply interested in or committed to Communist ideology, they are certainly imbued with patriotism and national pride. If they are bored by indoctrination efforts, they nevertheless accept, with few exceptions, the basic premise that socialism and the socialized economic system are superior to "bourgeois" forms of social organization. And if they chafe under

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restrictions, they nevertheless do not reject the principle of state interference—certainly not in the economic life of the country. Most important, they want above all to see continued material progress in Russia, and in this sense they identify their personal welfare with that of society as a whole.

Young people, along with their elders, naturally welcome the reforms and concessions that have been initiated in the post-Stalin era. Yet herein lies a dilemma for the regime. On the one hand, the advent of what I have called "normalcy," along with the visible improvement in economic conditions in recent years, provides the rallying call for youth cooperation in efforts toward further progress; yet as has been noted, it is precisely this "normal" atmosphere which encourages the outcropping of more individualistic trends and values in the younger generation. The problem of the regime is how to contain the trends that it has set in motion. Thus, while young people appreciate the tangible improvement in living standards so far achieved, they expect and want a further improvement. While they welcome the retreat from the absurdities of Stalinist "socialist realism," they wish for a further breakdown of barriers to cultural variety. While the increased toleration of foreign contacts and influences pleases them, they still feel shut off from the outside world.

Most of all, youth—and the population in general—value the increase in physical security and the muting of terror in recent years. They even dare make jokes about the sins of the former god, Stalin.[17] The difficulty inherent in any retreat toward repressive measures complicates what is perhaps the regime's hardest problem—how to resolve the conflict between individual judgments of truth and Communist truth. This is a conflict different in kind from all others. Intellectual and creative freedom cannot be increased on a "planned" basis, as can the housing, consumer goods, even the cultural exchanges, that will satisfy most of the young population. In the current atmosphere, intellectual and artistic "explorers" are still resigned to party-line restrictions on their endeavors; the artists' "truth" is confined to private circles of like-minded colleagues. But currents of sentiment run stronger than one might assume against the party hacks (what some young activists will be in future years) who straddle strategic posts in the intellectual world. Perhaps, if this pressure ever reaches the point where it cannot be ignored, the party-regime will feel secure enough to move in the direction of genuine tolerance rather than of a new suppression of "violators" of Communist truth.

So much for the view from the Kremlin. As for the young people, they will listen to regime proclamations of new programs and new stages in the "building of communism," they will observe its attempt to rerevolutionize Soviet society. Then they will judge by results, by how changes affect the areas of life which concern them. The great majority of urban youth would be content, perhaps indefinitely, to see "within-system" changes —if those changes meant improved living conditions, less official intrusion into their lives, continued guarantees against terror, a less boring and more tasteful cultural life, and a further breakdown of Russia's isolation from outside contact. They would like, some of them, more chance to travel abroad—but unlike the Nazi youth of yesterday or the zealots of the Communist fold, they merely want to see the world, not to conquer it.

[17] To cite one joke heard in Moscow: Dante revisited hell recently. Cicero showed him Beria, in flames up to his knees. "Why isn't he completely in the fire?," asked Dante. "It's all right," Cicero replied to Dante, "he's standing on Stalin's shoulders."

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Recent Soviet Literature

By George Gibian

THE LITERARY FARE recently available to the Soviet public has been more varied than at any time since the tightening of controls over literature early in Stalin's reign. In some ways, it is true, the liberalization of the years 1954-56 has been arrested or reversed. Works containing serious attacks on the established order—such as those, for example, printed late in 1956 in *Literary Moscow,* Vol. II—are no longer being published. On the other hand, certain favorable consequences of the thaw of the mid-1950's were slow in working themselves out and are only now reflected in what is being printed.

The main improvements, from the point of view of the Soviet reader, have been: 1) a relatively more plentiful supply of translations from contemporary foreign literatures; 2) editions of Russian classics; 3) reprints of works by Soviet authors who have been partially rehabilitated after years of suppression (Olesha, Babel, Zoshchenko); 4) more "entertainment" literature, undidactic works, particularly short stories of adventure; 5) efforts at innovations in technique, especially in drama; 6) most valuable artistically, the rise of young authors who write feelingly of the purely personal side of the lives of ordinary individuals.

While the main stress of current publishing remains on Soviet works, it is important to remember that in Soviet Russia, even more than in other countries, what is published is not identical with what is read. Foreign and Russian classics and contemporary foreign writing seem to capture the primary interest of many Soviet readers. One would probably be justified in claiming that a correlation exists between the level of education and literary sophistication of a Soviet reader, and the degree of interest he takes in foreign writing at the expense of new Soviet books. It may be that workers on farms and in factories (about whose reading tastes outsiders admittedly know least) constitute the element who take current Soviet literature the most seriously. At the other end of the spectrum, some members of the metropolitan university and intellectual elite privately profess to be utterly bored by contemporary Soviet writing. The literary intellectuals are preoccupied with whatever they can find of the exciting, different, to them eternally *avant-garde,* Western writing.

Last November the present writer attended a Readers' Meeting in Leningrad, at which the editors of *Voprosy literatury* (Problems of Literature) announced the results of a questionnaire they had submitted to their readers. One of the responses reported was the readers' desire for more discussion of modern foreign literatures. The work of Remarque was frequently cited in answers to the questionnaire. (Later in the same evening one of the official speakers reported in another connection that the readers had urged franker treatment of love and eroticism in Soviet literature. Remarque is famous in Russia for writing about sex, a possible explanation why his work was frequently mentioned.) Laxness, the Icelandic Nobel and Stalin Prize holder, is also popular in Soviet Russia. The Russian readers, it became clear through the reports read at the conference, have been asking for critical analyses of foreign works and for articles about the "artistic side" and the "technical experience" of foreign authors.

The extraordinary interest of Soviet citizens in Western books is evident to anyone who has had any conversations about literature inside the Soviet Union. The subject comes up in every discussion. Hearing the report at the *Voprosy literatury* meeting served only to confirm—statistically and officially—the validity of the writer's own experiences.[1]

During two brief visits to Russia, in 1956 and 1960, I asked everyone with whom I spoke what Soviet readers

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[1] Other aspects of the meeting are described in my article, "The Personal Realm vs. the Official," *New Republic,* Feb. 13, 1961; on the literary scene before 1959, see my "Soviet Books Five Years After the Thaw," *ibid.,* Nov. 16, 1959.

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were reading—or, as I sometimes phrased it, "What is there that is really worthwhile in current Soviet literature —what would you advise me not to miss in the mass which is being published?" I asked this of students, officers I met on trains, representatives of the Union of Writers, artists living on the thin margin between official tolerance and rejection. The differences in the answers were largely predictable. The officials of the Writers' Union took a very rosy view, finding many writers of promise, while a poet who opposed controls held that there were few works worth reading. The official spokesmen would include praise for the Stalinist Kochetov (author of the "anti-revisionist" *Yershov Brothers*); the dissidents would only jeer when Kochetov's name was brought up. An official tried to dissuade me from reading Panfyorov's latest book ("It is not necessary to read that," he said), though others recommended it.

Allowing for inevitable differences, however, there was in some respects a surprising degree of agreement during my last visit in November 1960. Certain names recurred on the list of recommended authors. These were, first of all, established writers of the top rank, like Sholokhov and Simonov, who had published new novels. In second place were a number of authors, ranging from middle-aged to very young, some of whom have sprung to the center of literary attention suddenly, who were unknown even a year ago but are now being watched by everyone interested in literature. The appearance of these new names on the literary scene is the most hopeful aspect of Soviet literature today.

The writers most frequently mentioned were: Sergei Antonov, Yuri Bondarev, Georgi Baklanov, Sergei Voronin, Yuri Kazakov, Yuri Nagibin, Victor Nekrasov, Anatoli Kuznetsov, Eduard Shim, Vera Ketlinskaia, Vladimir Soloukhin, V. Tendriakov, and Yulian Semyonov.

Two Outstanding Novels

One of the most important novels of recent years is Konstantin Simonov's *The Living and the Dead,* published towards the end of 1960. Like all Simonov's works, *The Living and the Dead* is slick, competent, and very readable. To some extent it is reminiscent of *The Days and the Nights,* Simonov's famous novel on Stalingrad written during World War II. The present novel, though a more reflective work, also deals with the war. It relates the adventures of an officer named Sintsov stationed in Grodno (in former Poland), but by chance on vacation in the Crimea at the time of the German attack. Sintsov, with his wife Masha, attempts to return to Grodno. Traveling as far west as he can, he discovers how quickly the Germans have advanced, how inaccurate the official Soviet communiques are. His odyssey in search of his unit is a modern equivalent of Fabrice's confusion in Stendhal's description of the battlefield of Waterloo: trucks, disabled tanks, wounded soldiers, Russians and Germans mix kaleidoscopically in a situation in which nobody knows where the front lines are or who is infiltrating whom. Unable to find his own unit, Sintsov joins another, fights with it bravely, and is seriously wounded. His friend, thinking him certain either to die or fall into enemy hands, takes his papers away from him and leaves him behind unconscious.

Sintsov regains consciousness and fights his way back to the Russian lines. His worst experiences—and the book's main theme—only begin at this point. Since he has no documents, he is suspected, challenged, questioned. He manages to slip into Moscow and thereby adds to his troubles: he is considered a potential deserter or even a German agent. The question of trust in human beings becomes one pole of the novel: "What is more valuable, papers or people?," the hero asks. The other pole, related to trust, is truth. Simonov's characters watch Messerschmitts outmaneuver and shoot down Russian fighters and bombers; they think of former assurances that in Spain and Mongolia, their planes proved superior to foreign models. Recurrently they ask themselves the question: Why were they not told the truth about the strength of the enemy? Whose fault is it that the Soviet armies were unprepared? Why were the Germans able to penetrate deeply into Russia?

Along with Sintsov, another character who embodies Simonov's challenge is Serpilin, a former instructor at the War School, whose specialty had been the study of foreign armies. Accused in the 1930's of overestimating the strength of the German armed forces, Serpilin had been arrested, twice personally interrogated by Yezhov, and imprisoned. During the war he fights in the field, as commander of the unit in which Sintsov serves.

The distrust of a brave fighter who cannot explain how he lost his papers, the lies to the population about the real state of affairs, the evidence of officialdom's "not looking truth in the eye" and failing to prepare adequately for the war—all merge into one complex through which Simonov expresses doubts about the prewar leadership and implies an accusation against it.

The appeal of Simonov's book is broad. Sheer narrative interest is high; the novelist is a master of creating suspense. There are escapes, break-throughs, tales of daring resistance and superhuman endurance. To satisfy some readers, Simonov includes a few scenes of conventional Soviet piety, such as a prison scene in which Serpilin, himself the innocent victim of Yezhov's purge,

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beats to a pulp a fellow prisoner, a Trotskyist, for saying the revolution is dead and the party corrupted. But the main importance of the book lies in the implications of the questions it raises.

THE ONLY RECENT BOOK that may have surpassed *The Living and the Dead* in popularity among the wide Soviet public is Mikhail Sholokhov's concluding volume of the *Virgin Soil Upturned* (1960), published in the West under the title *Harvest on the Don* (1961).

The first part of Sholokhov's work, dealing with the brutal years of war communism, was published more than a quarter century ago, in 1932; the concluding volume completes the action with the victory and establishment of the Communist order. The White conspiracy in the Don region is crushed, its leaders apprehended. The Bolshevik hero, Davidov, has shaken off the seductive slut Lushka Nagulnova and become engaged to a virginal girl. He dies, but he dies as a Soviet martyr, a triumphant hero. In the village of Gremyachy Log, Soviet power and collective farming are firmly enthroned.

This robust novel is very uneven. Dull scenes describing party meetings and agricultural problems overlay the exciting story of the conspiracy. Yet Sholokhov's genius occasionally does reappear in its full power. He still has an ear alert to the strong speech of Cossack peasants, a heart attuned to their primitive, earthy passions, and a mind obsessed by the horrible, fascinating enormities of all the beating, killing, conspiring, and raping which his blood-soaked homeland has endured in this century.

The best parts of the book, which are as good as anything in *The Don Tales* (his first volume), are those reminiscences and interpolated tales in which Sholokhov deals with events of the past, particularly the Civil War —tales of violence and torment, human suffering and exaltation. Occasional diversion is provided by comic passages suggestive of William Faulkner's scenes of rustic humor.

The siren, Lushka Nagulnova, eventually marries a mining engineer and climbs into the new Soviet technocratic bourgeoisie. She has lost her fire, her body, her lust, trading them in for responsibility and self-satisfied fatness. It is evident that Sholokhov shares the feelings of his character Razmiotnov, who says:

I felt a touch of regret for the old Lushka, young, smart with her tongue, and beautiful. Now you might almost say I'd seen her in a dream a long, long time ago, once upon a time, so to speak, but never lived with her in the same village. Well, that's our life, boys, that's the way things go.

Sholokhov, too, seems to yearn for the bad, wild days, which were also the heroic days. For all the horror, the bloodshed, for all the resistance to communism and collectivization—due as Sholokhov sees it, to human greed and blindness—the old days were the time when human experience was vivid. The mining engineer on the city's paved streets in modern industrialized Russia may gain Sholokhov's formal endorsement (he ends his book with a look forward to the horizons of the future), but not his emotional allegiance. That he has given to the pre-industrial days, of which he gives us a glimpse, here and there, through the flashbacks and reminiscences of the *Virgin Soil Upturned*.

Millions of Soviet readers have read Sholokhov's novel, first in magazine form, then as a book. Sholokhov was awarded a Lenin Prize for it.

The Short Story Today

One difference between the current crop of Soviet short stories and those of both the Stalinist period and the years 1954-57 is that now stories of adventure are more prominent. This is true not only, as one would expect, of the shorter, less pretentious stories of a popular magazine like *Ogonyok,* but also of the monthlies—*Novyi mir, Neva, Oktiabr,* and others. In almost every issue one finds stories aimed at attracting the reader's interest primarily through thrilling action. Many are set in exotic locations.

This category of fiction can be considered an effort to give relief from the eternal didacticism of Soviet life. The stories have color; they supply some plain amusement for its own sake. None of them that the present writer has read are masterpieces, but many are competently done. A number of them are fairly slick and craftsmanlike war stories. Just like their colleagues in the West, Soviet writers are now going through a "second wave" of war fiction. V. Korablinov's "The Secret Shelter of the Forests" (*Neva,* January-February 1960), for instance, is an adventure story of guerrilla warfare against the Germans. Leonid Pervomaysky's "Coffee Budapest Style" (*Ogonyok,* No. 27, 1960) portrays a Hungarian Communist who, having fought with Bela Kun and fled to the USSR, returns to Budapest as a Soviet soldier shortly after the city's capture by the Soviet Army. The main interest of the story lies in the soldier's search for his mother, whom he has not seen for over twenty years. He is sent from one address to another until he finally finds her, and in a simple ending she brews coffee for him from beans he had sent her years before from abroad. The author leans heavily on the sentimental possibilities of the returning-son-seeking-his-mother theme. He does not, however, take advantage of the wartime situation to preach patriotism or Communist ideology.

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A more interesting story is I. Efremov's "Afaneor, the Daughter of Akharkhellen" (*Neva,* January 1960), which has the Central Sahara as its setting. Tiressuen, a young man of the Tuager tribe, is offered employment as a guide by an expedition of Frenchmen. The French party is portrayed as a combination of sincere, scholarly archeologists seeking the ruins of an ancient city, and disguised military officers secretly looking for sites for nuclear tests that will contaminate vast regions of the Sahara.

Tiressuen's tribe believes that many years previously a man they call El-Issey-Ef (to wit, the Russian traveler Eliseef) had come to their land, and unlike other white men, had demonstrated genuine respect and interest in the Tuagers. Tiressuen consents to lead the French expedition on condition that he be promised a trip to the Soviet Union as his reward. He is encouraged by Afaneor, a woman of the tribe, who wants him to take a look at the homeland of El-Issey-Ef, which in her opinion must be superior to other white men's homelands.

Tiressuen is the noble hero throughout the story. When the expedition's truck breaks down, he saves everyone by walking alone through the desert on a five-day search for help. Such sections of the story are a gripping, even if hackneyed, tale of desert adventure, danger, and salvation in the nick of time. Towards the end, however, political motifs and Russian nationalist self-congratulation gain the upper hand, along with anticolonialism, tributes to the Arabs, and attacks on French atomic tests in the Sahara. For example, the author interweaves praise for the noble desert savage with the theme of the superiority of Russians (pre-1917 as well as Soviet) to other white men: "The soul of the Russian sees more deeply into nature and has richer feelings than the soul of other Europeans. That is why El-Issey-Ef understood the desert nomads so well, and they understood him." In the end, Tiressuen does visit Leningrad, enjoys a sympathetic reception by the Russians, and returns enlightened about French "designs" in the Sahara. The story ends with Tiressuen and Afaneor watching with hostility the advance of a column of French armored vehicles.

Thus Efremov weaves into his tale every possible thread of interest. He flatters his Russian audience, pushes every stock response button, but does it so skillfully that even while one is aware of the author's designs and the fallacies of his implications, one reads with absorption.

A story without any official propagandistic bias is I. Metter's "Murat" (*Novyi mir,* June 1960). It follows a police dog's career from the moment of his purchase by the Leningrad criminal-investigation police to his retirement from active service because of bullet injuries to his nervous system. Murat, the dog, was a great hero, a skilled tracker and brave fighter. The story describes a number of missions on which Murat was sent with his policeman-guide. In Rin-Tin-Tin fashion, Murat caught criminals, found stolen goods, and attacked evil-doers.

The author employs two other time-tested devices to catch human interest: a detailed, almost documentary account of the training of police dogs and the methods used by the police; and a sentimental ending, in which the dog, unfit for further service and about to be destroyed, is saved after much supplication by his guide and permitted to live out his days as a "pensioner" in the police kennels.

The increase of adventure stories in recent years may have contributed to a certain decrease in the popularity of two other categories of fiction—"production" stories (dealing with problems of factory management or labor) and collective farm stories, both of which were prominent under Stalin and again from 1954 to 1958. The adventure stories to some extent are escape literature. By turning to a war fought twenty years ago, to the Sahara, or to crime detection, the authors offer something exciting and different from the readers' day-to-day lives. At the same time, the writers forestall possible criticism for "turning their backs on topical issues" by stressing the documentary value of their works. Many of the stories begin or end with a link to journalistic reporting. In the conclusion to "Murat," for instance, the author states that he wrote the story after seeing in the Leningrad Police Museum a stuffed police dog which had taken part in 4,000 operations and had helped to apprehend 2,858 criminals. "Coffee Budapest Style" contains a paragraph claiming that all the events described had actually taken place. "Afaneor" is topical and praiseworthy from the party's point of view because it underscores the Soviet propaganda line on colonialism and nuclear testing.

Questions and Negations

A few stories have appeared recently that continue the so-called "negative trend" of the years 1954-57 by dealing with delicate topics or by subtly changing the stereotypes of the officially accepted versions of Soviet life. For example, Sergei Antonov in "First Voyage," *Yunost,* October 1960, describes a newspaperman's trip to a remote lumber district in Siberia and his gradual discovery that Kolya Khromov, ostensibly a hero of labor who had been honored for such feats as driving his truck 100,000 kilometers without any repair, is in reality a nihilist, a cynic, and a criminal.

In the first interview, Kolya reels off to the journalist the Soviet honorific clichés about himself: "My character

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was formed in the period of the postwar Five-Year Plans, when our nation achieved great triumphs of labor and the bright stars of the sputniks directed themselves towards remote skies." Kolya even offers to lend the journalist an old clipping describing his accomplishments, so as to save him the trouble of having to write his own story. But Antonov's narrator hears hints of foul play. He discovers that Kolya has been dumping gasoline in the woods in order to simulate mileage, and cheating on production records.

The newspaperman turns amateur detective. He talks to Kolya's girl friend. A fantastic story of fraud and collusion is revealed in which the main villain is the *tekhnoruk* Akim, Kolya's superior, who has corrupted the young man. Yet more interesting than the bare facts of the "economic crimes" uncovered are Kolya's cynical pronouncements about human nature, which run counter to all Soviet ideology. This man, outwardly a Soviet hero, despises fellow beings, work, love. In a diatribe which begins with his view of his girl friend, he says:

Here in the woods it is boring for girls to spend their evenings alone, so they look for someone to pet with. . . . Today she likes candy, tomorrow she will like a pickled cucumber. . . . Men are no better, of course. Altogether man is a slimy creature. Everybody thinks only of himself and does not care a hoot for anyone else. That is the way it has been and the way it is going to be. They talk about building communism, but they try to grab the most they can, as quickly as they can, all they need, at the cost of the communism of the future. . . . I respect a goat more than a man. In comparison with a goat he has only one advantage, and that is that he has more intelligence. And about intelligence I am not sure if it is an advantage or a disadvantage. It is not important to have a lot of intelligence. The main thing is to use it. Intelligent people invented atomic energy, but they did not have enough sense to send powdered sugar to the lumber workers. That is intelligence for you. Look into man's soul: all greed, cowardice, lies. Intelligence gives way before greed, cowardice, and lies.

In total effect, this story of lumber workers—whose way of life is normally glorified in the USSR—seems to convey the message that surface appearances are not always the reality, that what seems real may be pretense.

Two stories by Sergei Voronin do not challenge party dogma, but raise embarrassing questions. In "At the Birthplace" (*Neva,* September 1959), Voronin describes the dilemma of Ivan Kasimov, a veteran who returns to his native village years after the war to find that Vasily, a fellow villager who as a prisoner of war had joined the Germans and guarded Russian prisoners, was living at home again, with the story of his wartime treason unknown to anybody. Ivan speaks with Vasily, who admits his guilt and pleads with Ivan not to denounce him. Vasily makes a moving case for himself: "I wanted so badly to live," he affirms. Ivan feels a great revulsion, yet to some extent also pity. After much hesitation, he leaves the village without having informed on Vasily.

Sympathy for a traitor, indulgence for a collaborator—such are the emotions about which the author compels his readers to meditate. In Russia, the subject of the story was certain to stir old, deep memories, and the inevitable result was controversy. *Literaturnaia gazeta* (Literary Gazette) published an attack on Voronin which in effect made it appear that he and not his character had been the turncoat.

In another story, "The Blue Danube" (*Neva,* November 1959), Voronin depicts the successive stages of a quarrel between two former friends, Ivan and Nikolai. As he presents it, the increasing bitter enmity between the two was guided and made inevitable by some force greater than either of them. One of them hits the other and breaks his jaw; he is sent to prison. When the prisoner is released, the other man, feeling threatened, stabs his former friend with a butcher knife and in his turn is sentenced to five years in jail.

Voronin's objectivity of narration and his failure to assign any blame for the brutal acts of these country ruffians are striking. He sees every deed from the point of view of the character who committed it; in that perspective, the act seems innocent or inevitable. Thus Ivan "was quiet and slow to anger." But Nikolai "had drunk his vodka, pulled his shirt out of his trousers, and this made Ivan lose his patience." Seen from the other side, however: "Nikolai did not like to fight. But it seemed to him very insulting that Ivan did not give him his money back, that he spilled vodka on him, that he hit him in the chest."

In this story as in the earlier one, Voronin shows sympathy for the weak and fallen. He concludes his story by reporting the reaction of the wife of one of the men, who "shrugged her shoulders, not understanding where this hostility between them had come from and why it was necessary to man." Voronin himself seems to share this attitude of puzzled wonderment; certainly he does not convey the official Soviet attitude of condemning the wrongdoer and using the example to make optimistic proposals for the elimination of crime.

The New Wave in Soviet Fiction

For several years after the war, Vera Panova stood out as the one Soviet author of talent who wrote about the emotional life of her characters, without feeling obliged to involve them in topical industrial, agricultural, or political concerns. She has now been joined by various other writers, for the most part young men who, unlike their Stalinist predecessors, show no interest in writ-

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ing for the sake of illustrating current public issues of the party line, and who, unlike the "dissidents" of the mid-1950's, are equally uninterested in any "negative" movement based on a reversal of party desiderata. These writers (Sergei Antonov, Eduard Shim, Yuri Nagibin, V. Tendriakov, Yuri Kazakov) turn their backs on public affairs. Their sole concern is to present—as delicately as possible and for the story's sake alone—the small events of daily life. They often write about beings who are victims of fate. As could be expected, love preoccupies them, and unrequited, unhappy love is more frequent in their stories than happy and married love. Much in their works reminds us of the traditions of Turgenev, Chekhov, and Bunin.

A recent sketch by Eduard Shim, "Night Journey" (*Pravda,* March 5, 1961), exemplifies this type of story. It is a brief account of a trip by truck. The chief passenger is a girl going to see her fiance. Previously married, she had been deserted by her husband, a scoundrel, and left with a son, but has not dared to tell her present fiance about the child. On this "Night Journey," she is traveling to her fiance's house in order to tell him the truth. The sketch solves nothing. We do not even know the outcome of the conversation between the lovers. Shim merely suggests a delicate human situation—a girl's fear of being rejected because of having a child, her need to tell her young man about it, the involvement of other people in her predicament.

The best writers in this *genre* are Kazakov and Nagibin. Yuri Kazakov, a young man, writes stories perhaps still more melancholy and subtle than Nagibin and Antonov. They are imbued with a sense of life's ironies. He writes of lovers who have parted because the girl fell in love with someone else; or lovers one of whom is married, who meet casually yet fall deeply in love, spend only one night together, and then must part—questioning whether "this was really love."

Kazakov's story "The Renegade" (*Oktiabr,* July 1959) is typical of his lyrical stories at their best. Egor is a "young man who is already a drunkard." He lives in a riverside hut, working as a ferryman and keeper of four lights on his stretch of the river. He once had a wife, who, however, drank too much vodka one night, tried to dance on the thin ice, broke through and drowned before Egor's eyes. Now Alenka, a girl from a nearby village, comes to see him on three-day visits. Thus Egor lives the life of a semi-derelict, a drunkard who spends his time sleeping and drinking; he is far from a Soviet hero. Yet the author does not moralize or condemn. On the contrary, Kazakov describes the solitary, broken-down Egor with sympathy, and, when he is singing, even with admiration.

Yuri Nagibin is more widely known in Russia than Kazakov. His first story was published in 1939, when he was nineteen; selections from his latest collection, *Clean Ponds,* which has not yet been published as a book, were printed in *Znamia* (January 1961). His stories are usually less poetic, more factual than Kazakov's, but they, too, focus on psychological analysis. Nagibin is aware of the ironies arising out of the failures of communication between men. His stories are usually bittersweet. His view of human nature is far more complex and less optimistic than the official Soviet view. Thus he is interested in the confusion of a girl who reaches puberty ("Before the Holiday," *Rasskazy 1959 g.*); in the inability of a game warden to say what he wants to say to a visiting novelist, and the latter's error in taking the warden for a drunken country fool ("Conversation," *Oktiabr,* January 1960); and generally in human frustration as well as in men's small triumphs.

Like Kazakov, Nagibin focuses his art on everyday incidents and ephemeral impressions. This, together with his utter disinterest in public issues, makes his work stand out in sharp contrast to the bulk of officially approved Soviet literature.[2]

Innovation At All Cost

In other areas of literary expression, there are also signs of change and innovation. In the Russian theater, for example, the great popular successes of the day are plays whose only claim to attention is that they are different from the run-of-the-mill repertory. Unfortunately, the mere fact of novelty is not a guarantee of quality. The greatest hit of the past two seasons is Arbuzov's *Irkutsk Story.* When the present writer was in Russia in November 1960, it was impossible to find tickets to any Moscow production; I finally did obtain one in Leningrad. The play centers around a flighty girl who, after flirting with many men, marries the one really serious man who is in love with her. She settles down; they have twins. Then her husband drowns, trying to save a child from the same fate. One of the girl's former suitors returns; he claims he has now matured to the point where he can truly love her. She postpones her decision—and the play ends.

To the Russians, this play is exciting. It deals with love; it presents situations of decision-making in love and marriage. It moves the audience to frequent tears—especially in the scenes when the husband awaits the children's birth in front of the maternity hospital, and

[2] An account of the work of Kazakov and Nagibin is given in my article in *Soviet Survey* (London), No. 36, April-June 1961.

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later when he drowns. Moreover, the play is novel in technique. In a departure from the stilted forms of socialist realism, it uses a chorus. In the production I saw, men dressed in grayish uniforms (rather like elevator operators) stood on a pyramid-like structure and solemnly commented on the events taking place.

The audience wept and applauded. The play is indeed "new and different" by Soviet standards, but it seemed to me no better than the average soap-opera on American radio or TV. It was a tissue of sentimental clichés. In addition to being naive *kitsch,* Arbuzov's play is pretentious and takes itself very seriously.

Another interesting facet of literature is the remarkable number of memoirs and autobiographies now being published in Russia. Ilya Ehrenburg's *People, Years, Life* has been appearing in installments in *Novyi mir.* It describes his Bohemian days in Paris 45 years ago, his acquaintance with Picasso, Rivera, and other artists. Konstantin Paustovsky has been publishing his memoirs in a five-volume cycle, *A Tale About a Life.* The last part, *A Jump South,* deals with the exciting postrevolutionary days in the Abkhazian state in Sukhumi. Kaverin has published sketches about his childhood, his early loves, his father.

The reasons for the popularity of such memoir literature are not difficult to find. Since the thaw, writers are a little freer in referring to past events and experiences. Thus Paustovsky now mentions his meetings with Isaac Babel, while Ehrenburg makes favorable comments on French civil liberties and Bohemian life in Paris. To the reading public, such memoirs are exciting for reasons similar to those which make Mediterranean and North Sea cruises on the *Pobeda* and *Gruziia* popular among Soviet tourists: they are windows opening on different forms of life.

By the same token, however, Soviet readers still do not even know of the existence of many important foreign authors, and they still chafe at their inability to obtain translations (not to mention originals) of works by some authors of whom they do know. Reading (and life) in Russia still seem to them uniform, gray, in comparison with what they suspect exists in the West—hence their drive to see or read or discuss anything foreign, un-Soviet.

Literary criticism in Russia continues to languish. Reviews and learned studies still usually bog down in the marshes of such topics as the "positive hero" and the "representation of contemporary reality." It is difficult to exaggerate the dullness of much current book-reviewing. The situation improves when there is a controversy over some work, as there was over V. Tendryakov's novel, *After the Running Day.* Then, at least, certain issues come into the open, differences of opinion are heard. It is perhaps a good sign that I. Vinogradov's long article in the January 1961 issue of *Voprosy literatury,* which seems to aspire at summing up and concluding the Tendryakov controversy, takes a rather liberal position. A similarly tolerant attitude is implicit in a recent article in *Literaturnaia gazeta* (March 2, 1961) by K. Bukovsky, "Story or Sketch," which looks with favor on Sergei Antonov's provocative "First Voyage."

TO SUM UP, much in Soviet literature remains what it was: stereotyped, tendentious writing on public, contemporary themes. The departure of Smirnov from his influential post as editor of *Literaturnaia gazeta* and the appointment of Kochetov as the chief editor of *Oktiabr* are recent evidence of the power of men standing for an "anti-revolutionist," strict party line in culture.

Nevertheless, there is now in existence a whole corpus of a "new literature" which presumes a new kind of reader and addresses itself to a different aspect of the human personality. One could even say that it is aimed at the larger, more complete human being. It does not assume that its audience is composed of "economic men" or political-social party enthusiasts. Rather it demands a response based on the presence, in the reader, of emotional subtlety and of sensitivity to the nuances of human relationships.

In 1927, in his short novel *Envy,* Yuri Olesha created the characters of Ivan Babichev and Nikolai Kavalerov, who feared that human emotions were doomed in Soviet Russia and that only machine-like human beings would survive. The two men organized a "conspiracy of feelings" in protest against the threatened de-emotionalization of life. The literature of the late Stalinist years seemed to confirm many of the fears of these "conspirators." However, the "new writing" of the last few years offers reassurance insofar as the survival of feelings is concerned. It not only assumes the existence of a lasting interest in man's private, emotional life, but tacitly gives this interest primacy over other areas of human concern.

In a programmatic editorial statement in *Oktiabr* (February 1961), its new editor Kochetov attacked with sarcasm those who thought "the road to communism" had anything to do with Ilya Ehrenburg's views on Chekhov and Stendhal, formalism in painting, and "that world which they call the world of feelings." Party-line ridicule cannot, however, change the evidence that the "world of feelings" has appeal for many Soviet readers, that they find in the new literature something fresh and creative, something that adds a lost dimension to life and evokes in their consciousness a response long dormant but never dead.

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Russia, China, and the World: III

EDITORS' NOTE: The following article is presented as part of this journal's continuing series on key aspects of Soviet, Chinese, and world-wide Communist policies. The next installment will contain several articles on Moscow's and Peking's tactics in Africa, as well as on the history and recent activities of indigenous Communist parties on that continent.

The Soviet Attitude on Disarmament

By Richard J. Barnet

THE FIFTEEN-YEAR disarmament dialogue between the United States and the Soviet Union has been resumed, once again focusing attention on the question, "Do the Soviets want disarmament?" Soviet propaganda offers a clearly affirmative answer. Soviet diplomatic behavior provides more ambiguous clues. Soviet ideology, even after Khrushchev's softening of the militant Leninist line, suggests even less grounds for optimism.

The question is too important, however, to be decided on the basis of such evidence alone. It is true that Soviet propagandists have capitalized, and continue to capitalize, on the disarmament issue; that the use and more particularly the threat of force has been a fixture of Soviet diplomacy; and that there are deep inconsistencies between the spirit of Communist ideology, with its emphasis on the inevitability of struggle and its pragmatic view of violence, and the concept of negotiated disarmament. Yet, in assessing current Soviet attitudes on disarmament, it is necessary both to face these disagreeable facts, and at the same time to look beyond them. The question to consider is not so much "Do the Soviets want disarmament?"—as if it were primarily a matter of moral choice—but rather "Is it in the Soviet interest to negotiate some form of disarmament?" And in posing the question we should be fairly concrete, for what we mean by "disarmament" may well determine the answer. Obviously, a scheme that would result in the disarmament of the West but leave the Soviet Union with the option of either pursuing the peaceful path or rearming would be a crowning achievement for Soviet diplomacy. On the other hand, the Russians are unlikely to accept a disarmament system that would expose the inner workings of Soviet society, unless they secured in return a substantial reduction of the threat of Western nuclear weapons.

I should like to suggest one approach for analyzing Soviet attitudes in this crucial area. So far as Western attitudes on disarmament are concerned, it is increasingly apparent that they are in large measure conditioned by what people think about certain specific problems such as the technological feasibility of inspection, the likelihood of accidental war, the threat of surprise attack, the economic impact of arms reduction, and the possibilities of controlling violence in a disarmed world. The whole Western approach to disarmament is dependent on attitudes toward such related issues. The Soviets, for their part, recognize that arms control is both an aspect of

Mr. Barnet, a practicing lawyer, has recently specialized in problems of disarmament. His Who Wants Disarmament? *was published last year by Harvard University Press.*

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military policy and a weapon of the cold war. Soviet positions on disarmament, therefore, must be examined in the context of their own basic assumptions on the nature of war and of the world-wide struggle against capitalism. On these and other related issues the Soviets have revealed their thinking with greater candor than they have on disarmament itself.

Soviet attitudes towards disarmament are perhaps best reflected in their attitudes towards war itself. The Soviet view is also influenced by other vital considerations, such as their estimate of the viability of the American economy either with or without an arms race, the prospects for exploiting violence in a disarmed world, and their concern over the impact of an eventual international control system on their domestic and foreign policy. But the most crucial questions for testing whether or not they are seriously interested in disarmament are these: 1) What is their view of the consequences of nuclear war? and 2) How likely do they think war is, without arms control?

Catastrophe—Total or Partial?

The familiar assumption in the West that full-scale nuclear warfare would mean the collapse of civilization is not shared in the Soviet Union. It is true that Malenkov, on one occasion in 1954, asserted that war "with the contemporary means of warfare means the destruction of world civilization." [1] But he himself soon qualified this prophecy. After Malenkov had been deposed a year later, Molotov made a point of emphasizing the heresy the former premier had committed: "It is not 'world civilization' that will perish, but the decaying social system of which bloodthirsty imperialism is the core." [2] Although the emphasis varies with the audience (in India in 1955 Khrushchev spoke soberly of world annihilation), the official Soviet view now is that "capitalism will succumb completely. . . . humanity would be thrown back, and the way to communism would become immensely longer." [3] Thus, war will retard but not prevent the inevitable march towards communism.

The possibility of total catastrophe from nuclear war poses substantially the same problems for the Russians as it does for the West. The horrors of war are a traditional part of the case for disarmament; and they also form the basic underpinning of the theory of deterrence. Thus, not only the world masses, to whom the Communist-organized "Peace Campaign" is directed, but also the Western powers, who in the Soviet view are kept at bay by the nuclear power of the USSR, must be continually reminded of the devastation of atomic war. But, at the same time, the campaign must not be overdone; comforting distinctions must be preserved. Consequently, the Soviets emphasize that despite the fearful destruction an atomic war will bring, they will "win" it. They assert this not only because the implacable optimism of Marxist theory requires it, but also because they know that a policy of deterrence can be pursued far more effectively if their own population does not believe that the Kremlin has entered into a suicide pact. The Soviet leaders are convinced that in a nuclear arms race there is no substitute for the idea of victory.

Khrushchev has pointed out on occasion that Russia's vastness and the dispersion of her population make her a far less vulnerable target than the United States, not to mention the latter's West European allies. Also, by increasing the emphasis on civil defense training and planning, the Soviet leadership has sought to create the impression that even all-out nuclear war would mean less that total catastrophe. The implication of such a view is that war is certainly bad and must be strenuously avoided, but that there are objectives of higher value than escaping an atomic holocaust. Thus, the enormous but finite dangers of nuclear war may not be considered so great as to justify a disarmament agreement that would drastically circumscribe the freedom of action of Soviet diplomacy or require fundamental changes in Soviet society.

The Balance of Terror

The second fundamental question influencing attitudes towards disarmament is: How likely is war to occur without disarmament? The risks one is willing to assume in the direction of *disarmament* are a direct function of the risks one believes to be inherent in the race for *armament* supremacy. Those who look upon a balance of terror as a reasonably stable system will be hard to convince that experimentation with disarmament is a prudent course.

Beginning with Khrushchev's speech to the 20th Party Congress in 1956, the Communist theory of war has undergone a series of dramatic revisions. War is no longer fatalistically inevitable, Khrushchev proclaimed—not because Lenin's concept of the predatory nature of capitalism was wrong, but because the strength of the socialist camp has demonstrated to the "imperialists" the folly of launching a war. Classic Leninist theory, which Stalin reaffirmed shortly before his death, maintained that the most likely form of conflict was a series of wars

[1] *Pravda,* March 13, 1954.
[2] *Ibid.,* February 9, 1955.
[3] N. Talensky, "On the Character of Modern War," *International Affairs* (Moscow), October 1960, p. 25.

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between capitalist states. On the contrary, Khrushchev recently asserted: "In our time . . . the imperialists are compelled to heed the Soviet Union and the entire socialist camp, and they fear to start a war among themselves." [4]

Similarly, Moscow considers the deliberate initiation of a capitalist war against the Soviet bloc far less likely than in the past. "Now that there is a mighty socialist camp with powerful armed forces," Khrushchev points out, "the peoples can undoubtedly prevent war." [5] He continues to assert that the United States is preparing for war against the Soviet Union, but he implies that the real aim of American policy lies in the preparations themselves rather than in war. "They would like," he explains, "to sap our might and by so doing restore the one-time rule of monopoly capital." [6] Ironically enough, this statement is an almost exact replica of President Eisenhower's remark that the true aim of Russian policy is to use the arms race to force the US into bankruptcy.

Khrushchev points to two major sources of Communist strength in what he calls the struggle to prevent the "imperialists" from starting war. The first is the military power of the Soviet Union. Quoting Western statistics on the massive destructiveness of nuclear weapone, Khrushchev suggests that even Hitler would have "thought twice" before attacking the Soviet Union had he known that suicide was his certain fate. The second factor is the growing economic and political strength of the Communist camp. Khrushchev exhorts the Communist world to "an active, purposeful struggle," which is to be "economic, political, and ideological." Soviet successes in these spheres, he claims, have demonstrated the dynamism and appeal of world communism and the growing decadence and helplessness of capitalism

The implication of these developments in Khrushchev's analysis is clear. As the balance of power in the non-military sphere swings ever farther to the Soviet side, the Western powers will become increasingly reluctant to risk an "adventure." Thus, the political and economic resources of the socialist camp not only make it unnecessary to resort to force of arms for the achievement of communism, but also open up the possibility of deterring the capitalists by non-military means. In a recent article, Major General Talensky, a leading Soviet military theorist, stressed the secondary importance of military deterence:

The advancement of military technology taken alone cannot serve as a guarantee of peace. The conclusion of the absence today of the fatal inevitability of war is based chiefly on the *social and political conditions* which have emerged in the world.[7]

True, any Marxist analysis of war would have to emphasize ideological factors. Ever since the days of Hiroshima—both before and after the atomic monopoly of the United States was broken—Soviet doctrine has refused to admit that any weapon by itself can play a decisive role in war. But there appears to be a growing sentiment in the Soviet Union that the "policy of peaceful coexistence" may be a better means of keeping the West at bay than a system of military deterrence with all its dangers. Accordingly, the Soviet campaign to encourage public opposition in the West to military preparations, to amass world-wide support for Soviet policies, and to isolate the United States from its allies and from the neutralist countries, is designed to deprive the United States of the economic and political bases needed for making war on the Soviet Union.

Annihilation by Accident

As the Soviets' faith in their ability to deter a deliberate war has grown, they have turned their attention increasingly to the threat of accidental war. Since 1957 Khrushchev has spoken frequently of a "fatal error" that could unleash a nuclear holocaust. The mad bomber pilot of the U.S. Strategic Air Command off on a lethal frolic of his own, the flock of geese on the radar screen, and the meteor that looks like a bomb have become familiar symbols in the Soviet campaign to dramatize the threat of accidental war. The Russians developed the theme of accidental war as a major argument for disarmament at about the same time that Western strategists were first expressing concern over the problem of miscalculation and faulty communication in a world of increasingly complex weapons systems. The propaganda motivation for the Soviet tack is clear. By stressing the perils of accidental war, the Soviets could make a strong case for disarmament without acknowledging either that their military strength was insufficient to deter the United States or that the balance of terror was a satisfactory situation.

But there is little doubt that the Soviets are genuinely concerned over the danger of war by mistake. Confronted with the technological problems of maintaining an alert retaliatory force which is neither too slow nor too quick to fire, Soviet military leaders are aware that American strategists face the same agonizing problems. The Soviet press seizes upon false alerts in the United

[4] Khrushchev speech of January 6, 1961. See *Current Digest of the Soviet Press* (New York), February 22, 1961, p. 8.
[5] *Ibid.*
[6] *Ibid.*
[7] Talensky, *supra*, p. 27.

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States, accidents involving Strategic Air Command bombers, missile misfirings, and particularly incidents involving overflights, to underscore the dangers of accidental war. Recently Soviet military writers have insisted that the United States has developed a "strike first" strategy, an assertion which they base on statements allegedly contained in the still secret Gaither Report,[8] on interviews and congressional testimony by American military leaders, and books on military strategy published in the United States.

Threat of Pre-emptive Attack

Soviet propagandists also continue to accuse the United States of plotting a "preventive war." But a close reading of their analysis, taken together with Khrushchev's confident statements about the effectiveness of Soviet strategic deterrence, suggests that what they really are concerned about is "pre-emptive war," which is the launching of an attack in anticipation of an enemy blow.

Since 1955 Soviet military writers have evolved a doctrine calling for a pre-emptive strike whenever an enemy attack appears imminent. Since that time, American thinking on arms control has also centered on this problem. It is the extraordinary temptation to attack first rather than lose the opportunity to attack at all that has struck strategists in the United States as one of the principal dangers of the arms race. Western proposals have emphasized schemes for inspection and improved communications to provide mutual reassurance. Schemes such as the "open skies" plan for the exchange of military information and reciprocal permission of aerial photography, and the more recent proposals for advance notification of missile launchings, are typical examples. At the same time the creation of an invulnerable retaliatory force has become a major goal of United States strategic planning. The development of a mobile striking force, consisting of Polaris submarines and of Minuteman missiles which can be launched from moving railroad cars, and the "hardening" of fixed military bases by concealment and fortification are designed to permit the United States the luxury of waiting for accurate verification of a supposed attack before striking back.

While the Soviets boast from time to time that their own missile bases are relatively invulnerable due to the vastness of their territory, they have attacked the idea of stabilizing the system of deterrence through mutual invulnerability. They have consistently refused to admit that they are reassured by the recent direction of arms stockpiling by the United States. Despite frequent American declarations that the Polaris is primarily a defensive "second-strike" weapon, the Soviets have launched a violent campaign against this addition to the United States nuclear force and especially its deployment to a base in Scotland. Nor have they sought to offer any reassurance that they themselves intend to be circumspect in the use of nuclear weapons. Moscow's veiled threats to use missiles against England and France at the time of the Suez crisis, its "symbolic" offer to use rockets to support Castro in the event of an attack by the United States, and the unambiguous Soviet ultimatum threatening to destroy any country which permits the United States to launch U-2 flights from its territory—all indicate that the USSR is far more interested in presenting what Herman Kahn calls a "credible first-strike capacity" [9]—*i.e.*, a posture of calculated readiness to undertake nuclear war, designed to deter provocations by the adversary—than it is in offering reassurance.

The arms race has become a bizarre hall of reflecting mirrors in which the attitudes of one antagonist are at least partly a projection of the other's. It is possible that Soviet decision makers are happier about the direction of US strategic planning than they are willing to admit. But their refusal to acknowledge that invulnerable weapons systems may lessen the danger of accidental war has thus far been persistent. This Soviet disparagement of the concept of invulnerable deterrents may be designed primarily to increase pressure on the West to accept general and complete disarmament; or, as some think, it may be merely a reflection of their lack of sophistication in modern strategy. In any case, a Soviet campaign to label "second-strike" systems as provocative would undermine some of the effectiveness of such systems insofar as they are designed to provide mutually reinforcing reassurance, since the degree of reassurance for the United States is in some measure a projection of Soviet reassurance. If the Soviets say they are *not* reassured, there will be some temptation to take them at their word, with a resulting increase of nervousness in the West.

The Issue of Arms Control

The Soviets have also opposed any negotiated arms control measures which would seek to stabilize the arms race at high armament levels. There are several explanations for this Soviet opposition to schemes that do not involve substantial weapons reduction. First, many of these schemes have called for reciprocal inspection of missile-launching sites. The Soviets have denounced such

[8] *The Gaither Report* was a special study of United States national security submitted to President Eisenhower November 7, 1957.

[9] Herman Kahn, *On Thermonuclear War,* Princeton University Press, Princeton, N.J., 1961.

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proposals as crude efforts by the United States to obtain target information, implying that they do not really involve reciprocal concessions in view of the greater secrecy the Soviets now enjoy.

A second possible motivation for Soviet opposition to arms control proposals is that subtle schemes make bad propaganda. The esoteric reasoning required to follow some of the intricate arms control schemes currently discussed in the United States cannot be capsulized in a slogan. Moreover, to advocate a system of stabilized deterrence is to lose the moral force and emotional appeal of a radical disarmament position. In the Soviet press, arms control measures are characterized as attempts to "legalize the arms race," while disarmament is hailed as a means of outlawing war. By advocating radical disarmment, the Communist movement attracts broad elements of the populations of both the uncommitted countries and the principal adversary nations. Not only do the Communists thereby gain new sympathy, and perhaps new supporters, but the governments that oppose the USSR lose a measure of the popular support they need to maintain an effective defense effort. As James E. Jackson, an American Communist, recently explained it in the *World Marxist Review,* ". . . the fight for peace and disarmament will help the working people in the capitalist countries to get rid of whatever jingo sentiment the bourgeoisie may have instilled into them during the cold war." [10]

In addition to their propaganda motives for opposing arms control through a stabilization of deterrent systems, the Soviets have some more substantive objections. Whenever they have discussed the subject seriously, they have referred to the extraordinary technical difficulties of maintaining a stable balance of military power in view of the fact that a technical breakthrough could destroy the balance. A. A. Blagonravov, one of the Soviet delegates to the Pugwash Conference in Moscow and vice-president of the Soviet Committee on Space Research, recently had this to say about devices for detecting missile launchings:

It is not unlikely that at some future time it will be possible to detect missile launchings. But it should also be remembered that every new military invention leads to a counter-invention, and it can safely be said that much research is being and will be conducted to paralyze any possible detection system.[11]

Thus, the Soviets appear to have some real doubts concerning the reliability of stabilized deterrent systems, perhaps because their own recent successes have demonstrated how crucial an aspect of the arms race is the competition in research. When the Russians proved by launching the first sputnik in 1957 that they had developed rocket engines with a significantly greater thrust than those available in the West, the reaction in the United States approached panic. It is precisely at the point when the adversary gives evidence of having achieved such a technical breakthrough promising to neutralize the deterrent force of the "lagging" power that the temptation to strike a "preventive" blow is greatest. The Russians have insisted that the technical problems of coping with this challenge are greater than the technical problems inherent in a complete disarmament system.

One development, for example, that could seriously upset the balance of a controlled deterrence system based on the possession of large numbers of ICBM's would be the perfection of a highly effective anti-missile missile. Although such a development is generally regarded as unlikely because of the enormous technological problems involved, Soviet scientists have expressed concern about the possibility. Writing to Bertrand Russell in the pre-ICBM-days of 1958, Peter Kapitza, the most renowned Soviet theoretical physicist, pointed out that international conventions designed to prevent atomic war must envisage the possibility of effective means of defense (against missiles) being invented." [12] He therefore suggested an obligatory exchange of information on research. Although recent official Soviet disarmament proposals have prescribed the abolition of military research in a late stage of the disarmament timetable, they have been silent on methods of verification and inspection.

Restricting the Atomic Club

There is another limitation of stabilized deterrence systems which has undoubtedly occurred to the Soviet leaders, but which they do not discuss publicly. Proposals for improving functioning of the deterrence system do not directly attack the so-called "*n*th country" problem—that is, regulation of the spread of nuclear capability to a wider number of powers. The Soviets do not discuss this question openly because it would require them to discuss their relations with Communist China with an unacceptable degree of frankness, but they have indicated privately that they are seriously concerned at the prospect of China becoming a nuclear power.

Although it is clearly in the interest of the Soviet Union to limit the availability of atomic weapons, and

[10] "The General Crisis of Capitalism Deepens," in Vol. 4, No. 1 (January 1961), p. 45.

[11] "Destruction of Means of Nuclear Delivery," in *New Times* (Moscow), No. 52, 1960, p. 10.

[12] Quoted in *New Times,* September 20, 1956, p. 14.

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particularly to keep Communist China and the satellite nations from obtaining them, it is not in Moscow's interest to appear to promote such a policy. Thus, wherever the Soviets have been called upon to take a stand directly bearing on this problem, they have sacrificed long-term "*n*th country" control for immediate diplomatic support. Soviet bilateral agreements on atomic cooperation with other countries, unlike such agreements entered into by the United States, have no provisions for inspection and control. Indeed, Soviet representatives in the United Nations have denounced safeguards designed to prevent the diversion of atomic materials into weapons programs as an infringement of the sovereignty of the recipient countries. In addition, at the 1960 Geneva disarmament conference, the Soviet bloc abstained from supporting a specific resolution in favor of studying measures to curb the spread of nuclear weapons.

There have been recent indications, however, that the Soviets are becoming more seriously concerned with the risks of the arms race. References to the expanding "atomic club" have begun to appear in the Soviet press. Soviet scientists taking part in unofficial meetings with Western counterparts have reportedly discussed the *n*th country question with greater frankness.

Moreover, for the first time since the Soviet Union launched the universal disarmament theme in 1922, an effort is being made to reconcile the possibility of disarmament with Marxist ideology. Soviet journals have recently attacked party members for refusing "to believe in the possibility of disarmament," [13] and for dismissing the government's disarmament policy as a "pacifist illusion." [14] Since the Soviet regime does not willingly expose ideological differences touching on sensitive foreign policy matters, this discussion might suggest that Khrushchev is determined to develop, within the Soviet Union, an ideological position that can encompass negotiated disarmament.

Since 1959 the Soviets have conducted an intensive campaign for "general and complete disarmament" within a specified time period, and Khrushchev has promised that if the West should accede to such a program, the Soviet Union would accept any controls and inspection proposed. This position has obvious propagandistic appeal and has been fully exploited for that purpose. Whether or not Khrushchev would actually sign such an agreement, however, is unclear. One possible reason for the Russians not to accept radical arms reduction, apart from their distaste for inspection, is that acceptance would mean abandonment of the "struggle for disarmament" which has proved to be a highly effective political weapon for them. On the other hand, the Kremlin now proclaims its confidence that the Communist system can win the struggle with the West in a world of near-total disarmament: a disarmed world on the verge of chaos would provide the Communists with a congenial backdrop for further penetration of the non-Communist world. If disarmament means the mere abolition of weapons without any change in the international political system, so that resort to violence at lower levels continues to be both a permissible and a practical course for sovereign states, the Soviets may have good reasons to favor such a policy. A more important question is whether the Kremlin's faith in the inevitability of ultimate Soviet success is now great enough to permit it to accept the kind of restraints on its international conduct that a system of effective controls over comprehensive disarmament would require.

Although recent developments thus indicate changes in the Soviet approach to the disarmament problem, they do not reveal either the depth or the extent of the changes. The Soviet Union, in promoting its disarmament policy in the past, has made many tactical shifts and offered a number of substantive concessions. But it has never appeared to accept the proposition that radical disarmament, which it espouses, will necessitate many profound changes in the world, including a drastic reorientation of the techniques of Soviet rule affecting both domestic and foreign policy. Whether the logic of the arms race will dictate so fundamental a shift remains to be seen. Soviet policymakers will indicate the answer by the way they balance the risks of the arms race against the opportunities for Communist aggrandizement in a supercharged world.

[13] *Pravda* editorial, June 13, 1960.

[14] A. Butenko, V. Pchelin, "Sovremennaia epokha i tvorcheskoe razvitie marksizmaleninizma," *Kommunist*, August 1960, p. 12.

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Communism in Greece

By Efthimios Papageorgiou

THE CURRENT POLITICAL scene in Greece presents a curious and deeply disturbing paradox: the Communists and their supporters, whose contribution to the wartime and postwar suffering of Greece made them as much despised by the people as the Nazis and Fascists, have managed in recent years, through political alliances and thinly veiled front activity, to bypass their illegal status and to emerge as a powerful influence in national politics. The problem of how to cope with this situation is a matter of grave concern for the government in power, the various political parties, and the Greek public in general.

As background for an analysis of the present scene, it may be useful to review the history of the Greek Communist movement, which has demonstrated the typical characteristics of an indigenous party organization loyal to Moscow, but which has represented in some respects a unique instrument of the worldwide Communist struggle for power.

Early Development

Communism in Greece had its inception in November 1918, when the Socialist Labor Party of Greece—shortly afterward renamed the Labor (Communist) Party—was founded in the industrial port-city of Piraeus. In September 1920 the party affiliated with the Communist International, and in 1924 it adopted its present name, the Communist Party of Greece (KKE).

Though the party initially had little impact on the national life, its course during the 1920's and early 1930's was marked by a succession of crises that significantly affected its development. It was outlawed for the first time in 1925 by the dictatorial regime of General Pangalos. Restored to legal status a year later, it soon became embroiled in internal dissensions over both local party issues and the conflict then raging between Stalin and Trotsky in Soviet Russia. After Stalin's victory in 1928, marking the onset of "socialism in one country," the KKE for a short period went its own way with a policy of extremist tactics and hostile demonstrations that led to a new crackdown by Venizelos' liberal government (while the party itself was not declared illegal, a 1929 law made other types of Communist organization and activity a "sui generis" offense punishable by short terms of imprisonment or exile). Thus immobilized, the party fell into a period of stagnation and new internal strife, leading eventually to the intervention of the Comintern, the deposition of the incumbent party leadership, and the appointment of N. Zachariadis as Secretary General of the KKE (a post he retained until 1956).

During the 1930's the KKE remained a weak and ineffective instrument of political action. Concerned by the growing indifference of the rank and file, the new leadership basically revised party policy in 1934 in an attempt to take greater cognizance of political realities in Greece. According to the new view, the revolution in Greece would take place in two phases, the first having a "bourgeois-democratic character," and the second involving "a fast transformation to a proletarian socialist revolution." This theoretical modification, based on the precedent of the February and October revolutions in Russia, had little practical effect either in enhancing the party's appeal or in inspiring more enthusiasm within the ranks.

In 1936 the new authoritarian regime headed by General I. Metaxas again declared the KKE illegal and adopted strong measures to enforce its dissolution. The top party leaders were arrested, and with the help of certain renegades, the party's organization was effectively broken up. The KKE remained outlawed from then until the end of the occupation of Greece in 1944.

Like other Communist parties, the KKE consistently adapted its line to support the Soviet policy of the late 1930's. So long as the Stalin-Hitler Pact remained in

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force, the KKE branded the war against the Axis powers as a capitalist war, even after the attack on Greece by Mussolini's troops in October 1940. Not until Hitler's invasion of the USSR in June 1941 did the Communists switch face to take part in the resistance movement in Greece, by then occupied by Italian, German and Bulgarian forces.

Wartime Activities

It was not long before the Greek Communists demonstrated that their tactics in the resistance were aimed less at the liberation of Greece than at the creation of conditions for a Communist seizure of power. Their initial resistance organizations were the "National Liberation Front" (EAM) and the "National Popular Liberation Army" (ELAS), later supplemented by another group, the "Organization for the Protection of Popular Fighters" (OPLA—also the Greek word for "arms"). Recruitment for these organizations was voluntary until it became known that the KKE was the mainspring activating them. Thereafter the Communists used duress and terror to enlist supporters: reactionaries, some genuine but others by Communist designation, were assassinated; citizens who hesitated to join the KKE-sponsored organizations were accused of collaboration with the enemy and terrorized, as were people who joined and then tried to leave the groups.

The Communists made three concerted attempts to seize power—one during the occupation, the second right after Greece's liberation, and the third after the close of the war. These are known in Greece as the "three rounds."

The first round, which started in September 1943, was marked by a vast increase in forcible recruitment for EAM, ELAS and the newly-founded OPLA. Simultaneously a campaign of terror was launched to destroy the non-Communist national resistance organizations in Greece, an attempt that succeeded in the case of EKKA (whose leader, Colonel Psarrós, was assasinated) but failed in the case of the EDES organization. The Communists also tried to gain control over the Greek armed forces fighting on the side of the allies in the Middle East, toward which end party followers among the troops organized a rebellion in April 1944; the uprising was put down, though not without damage to the prestige of Greece and its free army.

Nonetheless, the role and the comparative strength of the Communists in the resistance assured them a voice in plans for the post-liberation period. In September 1944, having in the meantime agreed to join in a so-called "National Unity" Government to take over as liberation was achieved, the KKE signed the Agreement of Caserta, making its guerrillas responsible to this government, which in turn placed them under the commander-in-chief of the British troops assigned to Greece after the withdrawal of the Germans.

On December 3, 1944—just 68 days after the signing of the Agreement of Caserta and 52 days after the liberation of Athens—the KKE again attempted to seize power by launching an armed uprising, known as the "Battle of Athens" since it centered around the capital city. The revolution lasted one month, inflicting suffering and damages that war-weary Greece could ill afford. With brutal disregard for life and property, the Communist forces killed thousands of citizens (total deaths were estimated at somewhere near 35,000), plundered homes and business establishments, and seized large numbers of hostages for ransom—many of whom could not pay the price of their release. On January 10, 1945, the Communists asked for an armistice; their capitulation was formalized in the so-called Agreement of Varkiza, signed a month later. Probably due to the climate of world opinion, which still looked on all resistance elements as allies who had helped defeat the Axis, the top Communist leaders managed to escape criminal punishment for the December revolt, the penalty for the consequences falling upon their lesser agents.

Round Three: Guerrilla Warfare

On February 12, 1946—the first anniversary of the signing of the Varkiza Agreement—the Central Committee of the KKE, meeting in plenary session, resolved to try once again to seize control of the country, this time through the organization of guerrilla warfare. The party leadership believed that it could succeed in such a venture since it could rely on active support from the Communist-controlled border states of Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia (then still in the Soviet camp). Moreover, the KKE had fighters and hidden stores of arms at its disposal while the Greek Army, in the first steps of postwar reorganization, was very small and ill-equipped.

Despite their initial advantage, the Communist guerrilla forces were eventually crushed, after a three-year struggle (1946-49) that ravaged the country. Their defeat was due to several factors. In the first place, the government was enabled to build up its army, to equip it with modern weapons, and to adapt it to the exigencies of guerrilla warfare as a result of the material aid extended by the United States. Perhaps more important, the Communists' persistence in brutal terrorism—including the razing of entire villages, the abduction of children from their homes, and indiscriminate killings and

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assassinations—lost them any support they might have had among the Greek populace. The Communists were also hurt by Yugoslavia's decision—after its defection from the Soviet bloc in 1948—to close its borders with Greece, thereby depriving the KKE of a base of operations.

The losses and damages inflicted on Greece during the guerrilla war were severe. Official figures released after the close of hostilities reported 21,500 dead on the national side (including 3,500 civilian citizens), and 70,000 on the Communist side; 27,000 wounded or disabled army men; and 3,000 prisoners of war lost to the Communists. Epitomizing the barbarism of the guerrillas, some 28,000 children (5 to 8 years old) as well as 20,000 other non-combatants were forcibly abducted from their homes and sent, along with the prisoners of war, behind the Iron Curtain. On the material side, the cost of damages was assessed at $380 million.

The KKE leadership itself sought refuge in Eastern Europe, whence Zachariadis declared with bravado in September 1949 that the abandonment of armed struggle was only a temporary maneuver, that "the arms are still ready at hand," and that the Communists would "reorganize their forces for the new decisive battles of the future." The KKE had again been outlawed (in September 1947), and has remained illegal since. Its leaders have continued to direct Communist activity in Greece from their berth behind the Curtain.

Old Aims, New Methods

Undaunted by their failure, these leaders were soon at work devising new operational tactics. One of their first concerns was to reorganize a network of subversive machinery throughout Greece. Evidence shows that a number of Communist agents, working singly or in groups, and sometimes carrying radio equipment, secretly reentered the country. One group of 20 was run down and annihilated soon after it crossed the border in 1950. Another group managed to carry on its activities for six months before it was discovered. Two more groups were tracked down in November 1951, one on a mission to distribute funds for subversive activity, the other engaged in spying. Still another mission which had entered Greece from Bulgaria was discovered and wiped out in 1954. How many agents were successful in eluding capture is not known.

At the same time that it was setting up new subversive machinery, the KKE started implementing a plan of "lawful action" aimed at renewing its contact with the masses through front activity. The first opportunity for such an effort was offered by the parliamentary elections scheduled for March 1950. While the Communist label was of course taboo, the KKE engineered the formation of a so-called "Democratic Group" composed of party sympathizers and various fellow travelers, along with party members who had remained in Greece. Candidates proposed by the "Democratic Group" succeeded in winning 18 out of some 250 parliamentary seats in the elections. However, the coalition group in Parliament soon broke up into small factions, each willing to follow certain, but not all, of the directives issued by the KKE.

In the following year, 1951, the KKE enlisted cooperation for a second political front, the "United Democratic Left" (*Eniaia Dimokratiki Aristara,* or EDA). This group has remained in existence since, protected from the law by its formal status as a coalition of parties, but dominated by Communists as manifested both in its hierarchical organization and in its adherence to the party line. Its leaders have never denied that they are Communists and in fact have flaunted their loyalty to the exiled KKE organization in EDA's official organ, *Avgi,* which not only endorses the general Soviet policy line on all issues but regularly publishes resolutions and directives issued by the KKE leadership. Only in one instance, as we shall see, has there been evidence that the EDA has ignored orders from the KKE.

Insofar as domestic aims are concerned, the EDA's policy has become increasingly clear-cut over the last decade. In brief, it has sought: (1) restoration of legal status to the KKE; (2) the granting of a general amnesty, allowing the reentry into Greece of some 10,000 Communist guerrilla fighters who retreated to Eastern Europe, the return of the children and adults abducted during the war (who have since been subjected to intensive Communist indoctrination), and the release of Communists imprisoned for subversive activities or confined to exile on certain Greek islands; (3) the creation of a wider Popular Front through which the Communists could break out of their political isolation; and (4) more broadly, the withdrawal of Greece from its alliances with the Western powers, promoted as an issue of "national independence."

The Road Back

In its first five years of activity, the EDA remained a relatively ineffectual organization, isolated from the great majority of the Greek populace. (Elections in 1951 gave them 10 parliamentary seats out of 250; in the following year, under a revised electoral system, they got no seats at all out of 300.) The last five years have, however, produced another story: they have seen a new

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resurgence of the Communist-dominated Left to a degree that warrants great concern in any sober assessment of the Greek scene.

The specific turning point in the fortunes of EDA was the parliamentary election of February 1956. In the campaign preceding the election, the EDA—whose previous approaches had been ignored by all but a fringe on the Left—succeeded in promoting a Popular Front coalition called the "Democratic Union," in cooperation with certain nationalist parties of the political Center and Right. On the face of it, this development, coming only seven years after the guerrilla war that had ravaged Greece, seemed an unbelievable phenomenon. It was dictated, however, by specific political circumstances which developed following the death in 1955 of Marshal Papagos, head of the conservative government then in power. Mr. K. Karamanlis, the present Premier, was the choice of the King of Greece to form a new government. Toward the end of demonstrating popular support for Mr. Karamanlis, and thereby inducing cooperation from the conservative forces which had supported Papagos, the new government proclaimed parliamentary elections for February 19, 1956, at the same time passing an Electoral Act providing for the application of the majority system of representation in some constituencies, the proportional system in others. An immediate outcry was raised charging that the new electoral law was devised to enhance Mr. Karamanlis' showing in the elections. It was this situation which prompted the formation of the "Democratic Union" as an act of protest as well as of electoral expediency on the part of various opposition parties. The outcome of the election tended to support the view that the electoral system favored Mr. Karamanlis' party, since the "National Radical Union" (ERE) was able, with 47.38 percent of the popular vote, to take 165 parliamentary seats, whereas the "Democratic Union," with 48.15 percent of the vote, got 132 seats (of which EDA delegates numbered 18).

That the popular front coalition was a "union of convenience" from the point of view of the non-Communist joiners was apparent even before the election: they refused, despite strong pressures from the EDA, to include in the coalition platform the Communists' demand for the legalization of the KKE. As soon as the election was over, their cooperation with the EDA ceased and their delegations in parliament resumed an independent course.

The Communists, however, had reaped the profit they sought. Despite the short duration and illusory nature of the coalition, it had enabled them to break out of their political isolation, to campaign under a joint banner not merely with fellow-travelers but with national parties of the Center and Right, and thus to recapture a semblance of respectability in the eyes of the public.

This factor was of vital importance in the next parliamentary elections, held two years later in May 1958. Again attempts were made to form a popular front coalition, but negotiations fell apart over four basic issues: (1) the nationalist parties wanted a platform declaration that Greece would maintain its alliances with the West, to which EDA would not agree; (2) EDA wanted a statement of opposition to the installation of missile launching sites in Greece, to which the other parties in turn objected; (3) EDA demanded a specific promise of amnesty for political exiles and prisoners, but the other parties would compromise only to the extent of a general policy statement that the past should be forgotten; (4) finally, EDA wanted a platform plank promising a 30 percent increase in salaries and wages and a 50 percent increase in pension allowances, but the other parties refused to undertake specific commitments of this magnitude prior to a careful reassessment of national economic conditions.

Interestingly enough, EDA's stand in these negotiations constitutes the one obvious instance in which it did not follow the wishes of the KKE leadership. Apostolos Grozos (who had replaced Zachariadis as Secretary-General of the exile organization after a shake-up in 1956) made clear, in a statement broadcast over the party's radio station and published in *Avgi* on April 11, 1958, that the KKE leadership favored a more conciliatory attitude on EDA's part in the interest of achieving a Popular Front. He specifically suggested a compromise on the question of Greece's Western alliances in return for an acceptance of its stand on rocket bases (an issue of first importance in international Communist propaganda). In Grozos' own words:

The differences between one side and another and any diversity of opinion on the subject of the existing alliances of Greece must not be made an obstacle to eventual cooperation, since the Left does not make an issue at this time of the withdrawal from NATO, and since the struggle against the danger of rocket warfare is of foremost importance.

While the Popular Front coalition failed to materialize, the EDA was successful in inducing a number of individual candidates to run on its election lists under the label of "personalities cooperating with EDA as independents," in return for which they were assured the full support of the EDA organization in their campaigns.

The outcome of the 1958 elections came as a surprise to all—government leaders, politicians, political observers and the people alike. Mr. Karamanlis' party, ERE, kept the lead with 41.16 percent of the vote, winning 171 of the 300 parliamentary seats. But EDA, counting its own candidates and those who accepted its sponsorship,

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managed to capture second place, with 24.42 percent of the vote and 79 seats. Among the other major participants, the centrist Liberal Party was third, with 20.67 percent and 36 seats, while PADE, a coalition of the parties which had refused to come to terms with EDA got 10.62 percent of the vote and 10 seats. Interpreting various election statistics, this meant that the Extreme Left had managed to attract some 15 percent more of the popular vote than in the 1956 election.

Causes and Implications

The explanations for this rise of the EDA are rooted in a complex range of political, economic and social factors, combined with domestic and international issues. One of the basic underlying causes is the character of social and economic conditions in Greece. The average income of the population is very low; conversely, wealth is concentrated in the hands of a minority. Four-fifths of the people are small-holder farmers for whom there are no health and pension programs. There had been widespread hope that postwar economic recovery, boosted by US economic aid, would lead to a general increase in income levels; but since most aid has been directed into long-term development projects, the population at large has as yet felt little direct benefit in terms of an amelioration of its living conditions. The people have become increasingly dissatisfied with this situation and increasingly prone to look for a change that would bring about economic and social reforms.

To one degree or another, most of the political parties have acknowledged the need for such reforms, but various factors in the structure of political power have prevented their enactment—primarily the tensions between conservative and progressive elements both on the Right and in the so-called Center. The Left, on the other hand, is easily dominated by the Communists and those willing to support them. Repeated efforts to establish a genuine Socialist movement which could compete with the Communists have met with failure, due to the disposition of the Greek people, whatever their individual sympathies, to identify socialism with communism (a consequence of the wartime collaboration of Socialist elements with EAM and also of the adoption of the Socialist label by the aforementioned 1950 Democratic Front). In contrast to the Center and the Right, the EDA-dominated Left is exceedingly well-organized and active in all sections of the country. Furthermore, as noted earlier, it has been lavish if opportunistic in its promises of reforms which would raise income levels and living standards.

The increased strength of the EDA and its collaborators represents an encroachment on the vote normally falling to the Center parties. Were this trend to continue, it would tend to create a polarization between the Right and the Left. There are some non-Communists who feel that the latter development might be healthy for Greece, leading to the emergence of a two-party system which, it is argued, has helped to guarantee democratic government in such countries as Britain and the United States. The trouble with this argument is that such a system presupposes the primary concern of both parties for the nation and for the national interest—a condition that is hardly assured in the case of the EDA, since Communists expressly avow first loyalty to Moscow.

The socio-economic problems described above have been aggravated in recent years by adverse developments in Greece's national economy and trade. Through tactics probably devised in Moscow, the Communists were quick to exploit this situation by coordinating the intense propaganda of the EDA with the Soviet bloc's general trade offensive. The specific problem was a decline in Greek exports, which left the farmers unable to dispose quickly of their agricultural products, particularly tobacco. Soon after the decline became noticeable (in 1958), the EDA initiated a countrywide campaign stressing the need for expanding trade with East European countries, which, it was said, were in a position to buy Greek agricultural surpluses. Probably this propaganda had some influence on the 1958 vote (though the decline was just developing, and the hard core of EDA strength was in the urban centers).

In practice, such trade agreements as have been concluded with the Soviet bloc have created new problems in the economy, since they have obligated Greece to purchase certain products from the "people's democracies" in exchange for its agricultural produce. Among these products have been certain items already produced domestically as well as imported, and producers directly affected have complained that they are being hurt by the Soviet bloc competition.

Obviously there is no easy solution for this predicament. One "way out" has recently been aired by an interested party, however—Nikita Khrushchev himself. The Soviet Union has never ceased proclaiming loudly in its propaganda that there were "no political strings attached" to its offers of trade or of development aid to Greece. Just what this claim is worth was made eminently clear by Khrushchev in a statement to Sophocles Venizelos, head of the Liberal Party and one of a group of Greek politicians who visited Russia in June 1960. Mr. Venizelos has quoted the Soviet Premier as follows:

It would mean practically nothing for the Soviet Union to absorb any farm products, even though the same crops are raised both by the Balkan friends of Russia and by

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the Soviet Union itself. But it is difficult for the Soviet Union to undertake this economic initiative, so long as relations between the Soviet Union and Greece are not good. And they are not good because Greece maintains American bases on its soil.[1]

The head of the EDA, J. Passalidis, who also made the trip to Russia, parroted this theme a month later (August 1, 1960), stating in a press conference that the development of commercial relations with the Soviet Union and other "socialist" countries would be possible only "if and when friendly relations with these countries do exist, which means that the soil of our land must not be used for spying and for aggressive activities against the Soviet Union, official spokesmen should refrain from nurturing a spirit of enmity, and the development of cultural relations should not be obstructed." [2]

International Thorns

As the above statements underscore, the domestic issues contributing to the recent gains of the EDA are tied to and perhaps even overshadowed by international issues of import. While the primary target of Communist propaganda, as reflected in Khrushchev's remarks, has been the existence of US bases in Greece, the issue of overriding importance insofar as Greek public opinion is concerned has been the crucial problem of Cyprus. It is easy to understand, of course, why the sympathy of the nation lay with the Greek majority on Cyprus in its demands for self-determination. A case has been made from the viewpoint of the Western alliance as a whole that this problem had to be considered through the prism of a possible disturbance in the relations among Greece, Britain and Turkey, all members of NATO, and that some form of compromise therefore had to be sought. Yet among Greeks the feeling inevitably arose that the principle of self-determination was being sacrificed to the exigencies of allied solidarity. The Soviet Union, on the other hand, supported the position of the Cypriot majority, though in taking this stand, it was merely pursuing its own tactics of aggravating divisive tendencies within the NATO alliance. In any event, the Greek Communists were handed a useful issue in their efforts to increase their following; propaganda issuing both from EDA and from the Soviet Union has exploited this problem to the fullest.

Concomitantly, Communist propaganda has been applying constant pressure—sometimes subtle and sometimes baldly threatening—to develop public feeling against the existence of American bases and missile installations in Greece. The psychological tactic of this propaganda has been to nurture fear of the retaliation and devastation that would befall Greece in the event of an outbreak of hostilities. The issue probably influenced some votes in the 1958 election, although the maximum peak of the propaganda campaign came later, at the time of Mr. Khrushchev's visit to Albania in May 1959. From that country the Soviet Premier issued the following statement on May 25:

We warn the Greek government to use its reason, and we warn it against the dangers involved in the installation on its soil of rocket and nuclear weapons bases. The Soviet Government hopes that Greece will become a neutral zone, that it will withdraw from NATO if possible, and that it will not consent to any installation on its soil of bases for the launching of rockets.[3]

Khrushchev's statement evoked a strong reaction from the Greek government, which charged that the Soviet Premier's intent was to intimidate the population and demanded respect for the dignity and integrity of Greece. In this reaction it was widely supported by Greek public opinion.

While on the one hand Communist pressures from abroad and at home have played upon public fear and exploited national problems, on the other they have attempted to demonstrate the friendliness and peaceful intent of the Soviet bloc. Again such propaganda is targeted directly at the public in an effort to woo support or at the least to encourage neutralism. An example of such tactics was the proposal of Mr. Stoika, Prime Minister of Rumania, that a conference of Balkan countries be held for the purpose of restoring friendly regional relations and discussing the possibility of creating a Balkan "peace zone"—that is, a zone free of missile installations. The proposal was designed mainly for show purposes, offering no concrete bases for a *rapprochement;* it was turned down by Greece, by Turkey and by Yugoslavia (the latter suggesting that bilateral negotiations should first be attempted among the Balkan countries). Greece has taken the stand that a precondition for any attempt to reestablish friendly relations would be a show of good faith by Bulgaria, which has defaulted on its agreement to pay $45 million in wartime reparations.

Recent Activities of the EDA

Over the past two years the EDA, in coordination with Moscow, has continued to concentrate heavy propa-

[1] See Mr. Venizelos' article in *To Vima* (Athens), June 25, 28, and 29, 1960.

[2] Text of Mr. Passalides' press conference in *Avgi* (Athens), Aug. 2, 1960.

[3] Printed in the Information Bulletin of the Ministry to the Prime Minister, Athens, July 1959, p. 18.

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ganda on the range of issues mentioned above. In its political activity and tactics, it focussed its efforts until recently on increasing pressures for "political cooperation"—that is, for a popular front—with other parties, particularly those center or rightist elements previously prone toward a coalition. The EDA's approach in these efforts has been to seek a minimum program on which agreement could be obtained but which could still be advertised as a promise of "change."

The most recent statement of the immediate issues on which the Communists were seeking agreement was contained in a directive issued in June 1960 by the Central Committee of the KKE (meeting probably in Bucharest). These provisions were listed as follows: (1) the prohibition of any use of Greek soil as a base of operations for reconnaissance flights; (2) the blocking of alleged plans for the installation of rocket bases on Crete; (3) the development of trade and of economic relations with the Communist bloc countries; (4) tax reductions, a solution of the problem of farm surpluses, and safeguards against the "exploitation" of national resources by foreign capital; and (5) the legalization of the KKE and a general amnesty, as heretofore defined.[4]

During the summer of 1960 the EDA evidenced a willingness to water down these points considerably, in the interest of achieving a popular front alignment at any price. That its conciliatory attitude constituted a temporary compromise was obvious, however, and its advances were rebuffed by the parties it approached. Since September the EDA has therefore switched tactics to address itself directly to the rank and file of other parties, hoping to win over converts and to bring about the corrosion of these parties from within.

The implications of the foregoing discussion are rather obvious. Communism in Greece remains an implacable force, ready to utilize any means, legal or illegal, to achieve its ends. Its agents have managed to reestablish themselves in an effective political organization which, regardless of how it masquerades, leaves no stone unturned to spread party influence, to support Soviet aims *vis-à-vis* Greece, and to pave the way for an eventual seizure of power.

The Communists' present tactics have been clearly indicated by Panagiotis Mavromatis, a member of the KKE Central Committee, in an article which appeared in the April 1960 issue of *Neós Kósmos* (the KKE ideological organ) though not reprinted in *Avgi* until September. Mavromatis wrote:

> **The multiformity of social classes and strata attracted or to be attracted toward a democratic movement demands that the party adopt appropriate policies of attraction, not of repulsion. . . . Those who have come or are about to come to us will bring with them their own mentality, their habits, their traditions, their particular interests, represented by their own organizations and parties, each having to cope with the ambitions and the particular pursuits of its rank and file, and their doubts and vacillations, which often stand in opposition to the overall interests of the democratic movement. Only an open-minded policy enforced methodically and patiently will be able to aid in consolidating all the democratic forces and in forming their front.**[5]

In short, the Communists are willing—for the time being—to sacrifice any considerations or issues of ideological alignment in the interest of attracting as wide as possible a following from among the Greek masses.

The EDA's recent increase in strength does not mean that the sizable bloc of the electorate that switched its vote has suddenly become pro-Communist. It does indicate that the Greek masses are not content with conditions as they are and are thus somewhat vulnerable to the Communists' easy promises of a change for the better. Popular sentiment in this respect—in combination with the resentment felt over Cyprus and the fear of involvement in war, issues which have been continuously exploited in EDA and Soviet propaganda—has been strong enough, at least in some of the people, to overshadow the memory of the past tribulations imposed on the country by Communist efforts to seize power.

The government in power could probably enact certain measures to curb the activity of the EDA, to the extent that the latter openly flaunts its allegiance to a party that is illegal in Greece. But such measures, however fairly or discriminately enforced, are not the real answer to the problem. What is needed—in this author's opinion—is the emergence of a more vigorous and forceful leadership to meet the Communist challenge on its own grounds—that is, to provide the Greek people with a realistic, well-considered program of reform that would show up in bold relief the expedient and empty promises of the Communist alternative.

[4] See *Avgi,* July 13-22, 1960. For later comments on this program, see *ibid.,* Oct. 27, 1960.

[5] *Ibid.,* Sept. 11-15, 1960.

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The Writer and Communism

By George Steiner

ONE OF THE STRIKING differences between fascism and communism is this: fascism has inspired no great work of art. With the possible exception of Montherlant, it has drawn into its orbit no writer of the first rank. (Ezra Pound was no fascist; he used the occasions and trappings of fascism for his own quirky economics.) Communism, on the contrary, has been a central force in much of the finest of modern literature; and personal encounter with communism has marked the sensibility and career of many of the major writers of the age.

Why this difference? No doubt, fascism is too vile and scurrilous an ideology to produce those charities of the imagination which are essential to literate art. Communism, even where it has gone venomous, is a mythology of the human future, a vision of human possibility rich in moral demand. Fascism is the ultimate code of the hoodlum; communism fails because it would seek to impose upon the fragile plurality of human nature and conduct an artificial ideal of self-denial and historic purpose. Fascism tyrannizes through contempt of man; communism tyrannizes by exalting man above that sphere of private error, private ambition, and private love which we call freedom.

There is also a more specific difference. Hitler and Goebbels were madly cunning manipulators of language; but they had scant respect for the life of the mind. Communism, by contrast, is a creed penetrated from the very moment of its historical origin by a sense of the values of intellect and art. In Marx and Engels this sense is explicit. They were intellectuals to the core. Lenin paid to art the supreme tribute of fear; he shied away from it, acknowledging the obscure, entrancing powers of plastic and musical form over the rational intellect. Trotsky was a *littérateur* in the most flamboyant sense of the word. Even under Stalin, the writer and the literary work played a vital role in Communist strategy. Writers were persecuted and killed precisely because literature was recognized as an important and potentially dangerous force. This is a crucial point. Literature was being honored, in however cruel or perverted a way, by the very fact of Stalin's distrust. And when the partial thaw came, the position of the writer in Soviet society grew once again complex and problematic. One cannot conceive of a fascist state being shaken by a mere book; but *Doctor Zhivago* was one of the major crises in the recent life of Communist Russia.

Whether by instinct or meditation, writers have always been aware of their special position in Communist ideology. They have taken communism seriously because *it* has taken them seriously. Thus a history of the relations between communism and modern literature is, in certain vital respects, a history of both.

MR. JÜRGEN RÜHLE is one of the host of writers and intellectuals who have experienced the spell of communism and then broken with Stalinist reality. Since taking refuge in Western Germany, he has established himself as an expert historian and observer of Communist literary and theatrical life. In his new book, *Literatur und Revolution*,* he has set out to write a history of "the writer and communism" throughout the world in the period from 1917 to 1960. It is a massive, wide-reaching enterprise: it spans the course of Russian literature from Blok to *Zhivago;* it deals with the poetry of Pablo Neruda and the fiction of Erskine Caldwell; it passes from a discussion of the politics of Thomas Mann to a critique of Lu Hsun. Furnished with a chronological table and bibliography, *Literatur und Revolution* is both a critical essay and a work of reference. And a mere glance at the index and illustrations shows that there is hardly a major writer in our time (Proust, Joyce and Faulkner are no-

Mr. Steiner is a young American literary critic whose background is as varied as it is distinguished. He was a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford University, for several years on the editorial staff of The Economist *(London), and a member of the Princeton Institute for Advanced Study. As of October next, he will be a Fellow of Churchill College, Cambridge. His two books are:* Tolstoy or Dostoevsky *(Knopf, Vintage Books, 1961) and* The Death of Tragedy *(Knopf, 1961).*

* *Literatur und Revolution,* by Jürgen Rühle, Kieppenheuer & Wietsch, Köln and Berlin, 1960.

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table exceptions) who has not been touched at some stage in his life and art by communism.

The first section of the book deals with the destiny of Russian literature under Lenin, Zhdanov and Khrushchev. It covers familiar but momentous ground. We observe once again the genius and bitter end of the revolutionary triad: Blok, Yessenin, Mayakovsky. Rühle is particularly interesting on the subject of that unwieldy, much neglected novel of Gorky, *Klim Samgin*. He argues persuasively that Gorky was unable to finish the work because he already discerned that conflict between individual life and Communist organization which was to drive so many Soviet writers into silence or death. Rühle goes on to discuss the chroniclers of the civil war, Isaac Babel and Sholokhov. Here again, his reading is acute: he shows that Sholokhov has always been a regionalist of an archaic anti-intellectual stamp, who has succeeded in being at the same time the voice of nationalist and Stalinist sentiment. He gives a plausible account of the Byzantine evasions and audacities that have kept Ehrenburg alive through winter and thaw. And beneath the crowded narrative of individual careers and works sounds the relentless motif of banishment, execution or suicide.

Finally, Rühle comes to Pasternak. He sees in Pasternak the true voice of Russia, the vision that will prevail beyond the tyrannies of the moment. He agrees with Edmund Wilson in discerning in Lara and Zhivago an unanswerable challenge to the historicism and life-denying determinism of the Communist ideology. The bare fact that Pasternak could conceive of their private rebellious love while remaining inside the Soviet Union proves that the Russian spirit is alive beneath the ice-crust of party discipline. Pasternak was among the first to read the farewell poem which Yessenin wrote with his own blood. He knew the famous suicide note of Mayakovsky. But by a miracle of courage and discretion he survived. And in *Doctor Zhivago* he drew up that indictment against Soviet inhumanity which his fellow-poets had hinted at in the tragic manner of their deaths.

There is much truth in this, and Rühle expresses it well. But not having been in the Soviet Union recently, he fails to realize how remote the world of Lara and Zhivago is from the imaginings and feelings of the present younger generation. It is the rulers, the old men, who are afraid of the book and who have sought to silence it. I wonder whether the young would see in *Doctor Zhivago* anything but a deeply moving fairy tale, or a piece of historical fiction as distant as *Anna Karenina*.

THE SECOND PART of *Literatur und Revolution* is by far the most valuable. It deals authoritatively with the tangled relations between communism and German literature. It is no exaggeration to say that there is scarcely a single German writer of note since 1919 who has not taken a declared stance, either positive or antagonistic, toward communism. There is some deep affinity between the historicism and systematic idealism of the Marxist ideology and the German spirit from which it sprang. Often, as Rühle shows, extreme right and extreme left meet in Germany on a common ground of totalitarian bias. The Hitler-Stalin pact, however deceitful and short-lived, was like an allegory of a genuine relationship.

Rühle excels in his account of Johannes Becher, the Orpheus of Stalinism, and of Egon Erwin Kisch, the most brilliant journalist ever to serve the Marxist cause. He offers a sensitive reading of the works of Anna Seghers, showing how her recent novels betray the contortions of a genuine artist trying to come to terms with the gray half-truths of "socialist realism." He illuminates the role of Marxist ideas in the historical fiction of Heinrich Mann and Leon Feuchtwanger. He suggests, in a carefully documented chapter, that the disagreements between Heinrich and Thomas Mann stand for a larger dialectic: the confrontation of the German mind with the opposite but related seductions of right-wing nationalism on the one hand and radical internationalism on the other.

As in the section dealing with Soviet literature, there runs beneath the narrative of individual lives the constant theme of blood. One after another, the voices of German poetry and drama and criticism were stifled by exile, murder or suicide. Reading this calendar of death —Ossietzky, Mühsam, Kornfeld, Theodor Wolff, Friedell, Toller, Hasenclever, Ernst Weiss, Stefan Zweig— one realizes that literature is indeed the most dangerous of trades.

After this masterful treatment of German letters, *Literatur und Revolution* goes on to survey the rest of the literate world. The pace becomes somewhat dizzying. In only thirty pages, Rühle discusses the manifold impact of communism on Camus, Sartre, Gide, Malraux, Eluard, Céline and Aragon. A further twenty pages wrap up the Italian writers—Silone, Pavese, Malaparte, Moravia, Carlo Levi. Less than forty pages are taken up by the complex flirtations with Marxism and Communist dreams of such American writers as Dos Passos, Upton Sinclair, Steinbeck, Hemingway and James T. Farrell. Brief chapters whirl the reader across Latin America and Asia. Inevitably, this latter half of the book tends to become a register of names, dates and titles—useful for quick reference, but inadequate to the variousness and complexity of the subject.

In the two closing chapters, Rühle deals with the principal apostates and rebels within the camp of Marx-

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ist literature. He discusses Koestler's *Darkness at Noon,* Orwell's *1984,* and the rueful memoirs of Gide and Spender. Finally, he records the rebellion against Stalinism of the young Polish and Hungarian writers of 1956. During the subsequent period of repression in Hungary, Tibor Dery was condemned for having led "an organization hostile to the state." A grim joke was made of this in Budapest: what might that organization have been? Answer: the Hungarian people. And as his compendious survey closes, Rühle reminds us of the many writers still in Soviet, satellite or Chinese prisons. The encounter between literature and communism remains both crucial and tragic.

AS A BRISK CHRONICLE presenting voluminous and scattered material in lucid order, this book has great virtues. But there is in *Literatur und Revolution* much superficiality. Often the problem is one of sheer brevity (there is not much new or revealing that can be said of an important writer in two or three pages). But often, also, it is Rühle's underlying assumptions that lead to oversimplification. Throughout the book, he seeks to establish a pattern of initial idealistic attraction followed by clear-sighted revulsion. The writer is drawn to the ideals of communism; he discovers the realities of party bureaucracy and Stalinist oppression; he breaks away. The Red gods have failed him. But in reality, this pattern is applicable only to a limited number of writers, and not to the most important. By insisting on it, Rühle tends to distort the evidence. Let me give only a few examples.

The case of Malraux is a test of a critic's insight into the temptations which totalitarianism offers to poetic genius. Rühle's account of Malraux's turn toward and away from communism is wholly inadequate. Though he has fought successively in alliance with the left and with the right, moving from the International Brigade to de Gaulle's cabinet, Malraux has never adopted a consistent political program. Whatever the area to which he turned, he has always pursued what there is in politics of heroism, violence, and conspiratorial loyalty. In short, his politics are esthetic; it is the formal shape of political action that draws Malraux, not the content. The clue to Malraux's entire career may be found in Walter Benjamin's brilliant observation that those who make of politics a fine art will always end in an elitist or totalitarian posture—whether on the left or on the right. Rühle fails to see this (and, by the way, does not even refer to Benjamin, who was probably the most original and profound of all Marxist critics).

Or take the case of Orwell. *1984* is not, as Rühle flatly asserts, a parable of the totalitarian rule of Stalin, Hitler and Mao Tse-tung. The polemic of the fable is not unilinear. As Isaac Deutscher has shown, Orwell's critique bears simultaneously on the police state and on capitalist consumer society, with its illiteracy of values and its conformities. "Newspeak," the language of Orwell's nightmare, is both the jargon of dialectical materialism and the verbiage of commercial advertisement and mass media. The tragic strength of *1984* derives precisely from Orwell's refusal to see things in black and white. Our own acquisitive society appalled him. He noted in it germs of inhumanity nearly comparable to those endemic in Stalinism. Orwell came back from Catalonia with a kind of bleak, stoic faith in a humane socialism which neither East nor West are prepared to adopt on any but the most limited scale. To make of *1984* a pamphlet in the intellectual cold war is to misread and diminish the book. The true allegory of Soviet society in Orwell's work is *Animal Farm.*

The same reluctance to allow for the complications of truth influences Rühle's account of Lorca. Despite Rühle's confident statement, the circumstances of Lorca's death still remain puzzling. There may have been in them as large an element of private vengeance as of political terror. Or to give one more example, the intriguing thing about the young Polish writer Hlasko is not the fact that he found Communist Poland stifling and sought freedom in the West, but that he then found the "free world" almost equally intolerable. Literature is a complex, ambiguous pursuit; it does not fall naturally into the confines of communism or anti-communism which Rühle seeks to impose on it.

BUT THESE are cavils. A more essential flaw in *Literatur und Revolution* is Rühle's refusal to distinguish between Marxism and communism or, more exactly, between communism as a moral vision and communism as a bureaucratic and political reality. In Stalinist Russia and the satellite countries, this distinction was eroded. But elsewhere, and with respect to Western writers who fell under Marxist influence, it is crucial. Constantly, Rühle lumps together writers who may fairly be regarded as Communists and those who drew from the Marxist theory of history and the Marxist account of social conduct substance for their own art. One cannot talk in one breath of Howard Fast and Romain Rolland. The difference is too great.

Strictly speaking, there are few notable writers outside the Soviet Union who have put their art at the deliberate service of the Communist Party or of Soviet policy. Becher, Aragon, Anna Seghers, Fast—the list is not long. It certainly does not include most of the important poets, novelists and playwrights whom Rühle

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is concerned with. What Feuchtwanger and Heinrich Mann gained from Marxism was a sense of the material pressures and density of historical fact. Sartre has drawn from Marxism support for his own highly personal vision of crisis and history. In Sean O'Casey, communism has never been more than the quixotic, mutinous outcry of an Irish sensibility against social injustice. In Malaparte, communism was a kind of private joke, the mask of a brutal but exacerbated romantic. To Pablo Neruda, the Communist ideology is a promise of vengeful utopia. Each case is different.

Moreover, there is a sharp distinction between those who have been disillusioned with Marxism and those who have actually broken with the Communist Party. In most instances, a break with the party leads either to silence or to Hollywood. A withdrawal from Marxism, on the other hand, appears to be a vitalizing process, leaving the imagination of the writer bruised but alive. Thus, in the lives of such writers as Camus, Steinbeck or Silone, Marxism has played a liberating role. Even when they have turned away from it, they retain in their talent certain characteristic precisions of insight and habits of moral protest.

And because Rühle refuses to distinguish between Hegelian-Marxist precepts and Communist practice, he fails to note the deep influence of Marxist ideas on Western esthetics and literary theory. Whether explicitly or unconsciously, our whole contemporary view of art is penetrated with a Marxist awareness of social context and historical dynamism. Even the most Alexandrine of "new critics" owes to the Marxist tradition some realization of the economic or social *milieu* that lies behind poetic style. Indeed, it may well be in esthetics, rather than in actual literature, that Marxism has made its most solid contribution. Yet Rühle scarcely mentions the three critics who, together with Lukacs, have brought to the West what is most fruitful in the Marxist view of art: Walter Benjamin, Lucien Goldmann and Edmund Wilson.

AS ONE PUTS DOWN this informative but one-sided book, a larger question springs inevitably to mind. Where have Marxism and communism been essential to the realization of individual talent? Where have they been accidental? Do we owe to the confrontation of literature and communism any masterpieces that might otherwise not have been conceived? Even if we set aside Russian poetry of the period 1917-1925, there are, I think, several.

Two of the greatest of modern novels, Malraux's *Man's Fate* and Koestler's *Darkness at Noon,* stem directly from the impact of the Communist movement on the life and imagination of the writer. They remain great, moreover, because they recognize in militant communism the co-existence of nobility and evil. If, in the proceedings of the party, one finds cruelty, cunning and the ruthless suppression of private values, one also finds sacrifice, courage and a fierce conviction of the capacity of men to live and die for ideas. Without Marxism and an eccentric but steadfast adherence to party ideology, the foremost dramatist of the age, Bertolt Brecht, might not have found his voice and style. The *Three-Penny Opera, Mahagonny* and *Mutter Courage* are classics of the modern imagination. They have passed into the repertoire of common feeling; but they are rooted in Brecht's personal communism and in the historical setting of the defeat of the German Communist movement. East Berlin is the city toward which Brecht was heading his whole life long.

Similarly, some of the finest poetry of Aragon is inseparable from the world view and vocabulary of communism. And the same, in a paradoxical yet decisive sense, is true of *Doctor Zhivago.* One cannot get that diffuse, meditative, often self-contradictory work into focus without realizing how deeply Pasternak was involved in the griefs and aspirations of the Russian Revolution. In many regards, the novel is a plea for a revolution even more total and inward than that which created Soviet society.

Elsewhere, the Marxist or Communist element in the work of art is often a superficial varnish or a convenient code to express a personal radicalism. That is certainly the case with the plays of O'Casey and the poems of Eluard. Often the attempt of the artist to serve the present needs of party ideology ends in grotesque misunderstanding: one recalls how Picasso, seeking to honor the death of Stalin, produced a portrait of a dreamy, vague young man with a Victorian moustache.

Finally, there is that most difficult question of the relationship between art and totalitarianism as such. History instructs us that autocracy, whether in Augustan Rome, in renaissance Florence, or at the court of Louis XIV, can engender great art and literature. Tyrants and poets have often got along quite well (even in Stalin, there were odd traces of this kinship—witness his treatment of Bulgakov and Pasternak). But how far can absolutism go before art falls servile or silent? Where do we cross the line between the artist as conveyor of the ideals of his society and the artist as maker of mere propaganda? Just where lies the difference between Andrew Marvell's ode to Cromwell and Becher's rhapsodies to Stalin and Ulbricht? If Rühle's book does not provide an answer, it at least sheds much valuable light on the nature of the problem.

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What Makes a Communist?

The Moulding of Communists: The Training of the Communist Cadre,
by Frank S. Meyer.
Harcourt, Brace, New York, 1961.

Reviewed by Karl A. Wittfogel

IN 1957 THIS reviewer discussed the subject of Communist mentality with a friend who a few years previously had broken with a major European Communist party: How seriously do seasoned Marxist-Leninists take the arguments of non-Communists who maintain friendly relations with them and who, in some cases, consider themselves Socialists? In this context I recalled my observations at the Congress of the League against Imperialism, which was held in Brussels in 1927 and which I attended as a young Communist. The comrades who organized this meeting treated the non-Communist Asian delegates, among them Jawaharlal Nehru, with the greatest courtesy. They listened with seeming approval to the arguments of these delegates, but they did so for purely tactical reasons. Despite their feigned affability, they maintained control over the official business of the Congress (the main resolution was written by the foreign editor of the *Rote Fahne,* the central organ of the German Communist Party); and among themselves they referred to the ideas of their temporary allies as "bourgeois" or "petty-bourgeois" notions, unworthy of any serious theoretical concern.

CLEARLY, the Communists do not, intellectually or morally, respect the representatives of the non-Communist world. My companion completely confirmed this observation on the basis of his own experiences in the USSR and Eastern Europe. More recently, a Chinese writer, Chow Ching-wen, who fled to Hong Kong after eight years of close cooperation with the Chinese Communists, reached an identical conclusion: the Peking rulers believe that prominent non-Communist national leaders such as U Nu, Nehru, and Sukarno can, if properly handled, be very useful to the Communist cause; therefore the Chinese Communists "do not attack these leaders, but they have no respect for them either." [1]

The Communists follow a unique pattern of thought and action. Indeed, at crucial points, their behavior is at complete variance with basic rules of rational procedure. Michael Lindsay discussed this phenomenon in his pioneering study, *China and the Cold War* (1954), and Gerhart Niemeyer carried the analysis a step farther in another pioneering work, *An Inquiry into the Soviet Mentality* (1956). In Niemeyer's view, this irrational element is the product of the image of a future society which leads the Communists to a total rejection of all existing values and institutions. Frank Meyer, in his study *The Moulding of Communists,* has given the argument a new dimension by investigating the conditions which make the Communist "different from anything with which we are acquainted."

IF THE COMMUNIST is different, what forces and processes make him so? In answering this question, Frank Meyer draws upon his own history of 14 years' participation in the Communist movement in the United States and Europe. But his book is more than just a personal account. Others with a similar history have described their experiences primarily in personal terms, and Meyer gratefully acknowledges his debt to these autobiographical accounts. His own study, however, takes a different approach. It is concerned, not with the lives of single individuals, however representative they may be, but with the general forces that underlie and direct all their experiences. It is this approach that gives *The Moulding of Communists* its unique value.

Meyer makes allowances for diversities in personality and in national and cultural background; his reference

A distinguished scholar of Chinese communism, Professor Wittfogel is currently Director of the Chinese History Project, University of Washington. His Oriental Despotism: A Comparative Study of Total Power (*Yale, 1957*) *was reviewed in the May-June 1957 issue of this journal.*

[1] Chow Ching-wen, *Ten Years of Storm,* Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York, 1960.

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to certain peculiarities in the Chinese policy of handling indoctrination is a case in point. But his analysis confirms the conclusion which Lin Yu-tang draws in his introduction to Chow Ching-wen's book: "A Chinese Communist is like any other Communist—whether Czech or Pole or Hungarian—in his actions, thinking, motives, and organization."

Part One of Meyer's study, "The Theory of Communist Training," identifies the objectives of this training and the means employed to achieve them. The moulders want to produce "an ideal type—the type of the imagined perfect Communist, the bolshevik." At the outset Meyer offers a sketch of this ideal type (Chapters I and II); but as the analysis advances, he fills in the details until, at the end, the reader has before him a vivid and engrossing picture of what the "perfect" Communist is like and how he thinks and behaves. The basic instrument in the moulding process is, of course, the Communist Party (Chapter III). Its main devices are philosophical pressure, the tenets of Marxism-Leninism (Chapter IV) and psychological pressure (Chapter V).

PART TWO, "The Practice of Communist Training," describes the intricacies of the moulding process, recruitment (Chapter VI), the advance to rank-and-file membership (Chapter VII) and ultimately to the position of a seasoned Communist, a "cadre." During this process there arise many difficulties and crises, which are countered by a variety of tested measures and by a sieving-off process that eliminates unfit elements. This explains the enormous turnover in Communist movements. In the American Communist Party, from 1936 to 1941, the turnover was as high as 80 percent. But, according to Meyer, this process affects essentially the rank-and-file membership. He reminds us "how very small a percentage of the seasoned Communists who have been through the mill of bolshevization have broken with the party." And more specifically, "In the American party I do not know of a score of cadre Communists who have broken within the last twenty years, and this despite the serious crises which beset it in 1945 and 1956."

Meyer's inquiry contains many profound psychological, sociological, and philosophical insights, and this makes every phase of his discourse worthy of close attention. Without going into detail, I should like to cite his comments on the central psychological phenomenon—the incentives that impel someone to become and remain a Communist, despite the countless pressures, conflicts, and crises that this entails. Among the initial forces of attraction are some which may be called idealistic in the sense that they transcend the individual's immediate well-being and material comfort: "the hope of a clarity dimly envisaged but not as yet achieved; an outlook upon the world which will make petty, pressing problems sink into insignificance; the idea of action unhampered by the confusions of the individual stance." But in addition to such forces, which we associate with all ideologically defined causes, and which are as good or as bad as the cause they serve, Meyer mentions one which derives specifically from the Marxist-Leninist claim to exclusive leadership in a historically determined process, *i.e.,* "the hope of being an accepted member of a history-chosen elite."

IT IS ESSENTIAL to recognize the importance of history in the Communist perspective, but given this doctrinal setting, the lure of power—total power—is, in my opinion, the decisive force of attraction. Mr. Meyer's study confirms this. When the newly-accepted member is first brought to a unit meeting, he may see "people he has known but never suspected of being Communists." Here, persons prominent in the outside world accept criticism and directives "from the unit organizer or from some other leading member of the unit, whom he [the newcomer] has previously been aware of only as a more or less insignificant figure." He soon discovers that the party also exerts effective power in larger organizations that are outwardly independent of the Communists. He acquires "a feeling of the power of the Party, a power with which he identifies himself," when he sees "a half-dozen Communists, of whom he is one, carry out plans which have been worked out in detail beforehand in a fraction meeting, and bring an organization with hundreds or thousands of members to take exactly the position the Party wants it to take." As he becomes informed regarding the policies of the international Communist movement, the new member acquires

. . . an identification with "our heroic Chinese comrades," with "our glorious Soviet comrades, moving forward from the successful construction of Socialism to the building of Communism." The compelling power of this sense of grandeur is more than sufficient to make up for the personal difficulties and dangers in which the individual Communist may find himself. The cause is advancing, the chariot of History is rolling inexorably on, and the Communist is firmly seated on that chariot, no matter how uncomfortable his personal position.

Thus, the Communist considers himself different from, and superior to, the upholders of all other ideas and institutions, which he believes to be obsolete and doomed. This view of history, writes Mr. Meyer, explains "the arrogance sometimes displayed by Communists in discussions with others, and by Soviet leaders in their international pronouncements." It also explains

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. . . why the known realities of the Soviet Union—oppression, slave-labor camps, purge after purge, murder in the millions, brutal and unprovoked aggression, even Khrushchev's exposure of Stalin and the Hungarian Revolution of 1956—slide off the cadre Communist's conscience like water off a duck's back. They make no live impact upon him. Intellectually he explains them as necessary casualties of the historic process, unfortunate but unavoidable. Emotionally they simply are not real, even when he has actually seen horrors with his own eyes.

The Communists' contempt for the arguments of non-Communists does not preclude the possibility of mutually advantageous arrangements in controlled situations. But it warns against making concessions (for instance, in the matter of disarmament) in a situation which, lacking effective controls, compels reliance on the Communists' "good faith."

To be sure, the supreme Communist leaders prefer victory by ruse or blackmail. But this, in my opinion, is not due to their concern for the countless millions who would be damaged or destroyed by an atomic war. If they feel that the continued one-sided growth of their power economy (including a civil defense in depth) assures the survival and global success of their power apparatus in such a war, then they will not rule out this alternative, despite the monstrous cost in men and materials.

Obviously, the realistic analysis of Communist thought and action is crucial for an understanding of the conditions that promote, or paralyze, the growth of man's freedom. To this understanding—"the science of freedom" as it has been called—Frank Meyer's study makes a major contribution.

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Moscow Discovers Public Opinion Polls

BETWEEN THE 10th and 14th of May, 1960, Communist Party and Komsomol workers handed blank questionnaires to a total of 1,000 Soviet citizens at ten points along the 30th meridian, from Nikel in the north to Gaivoron in the south. The importance of this event goes beyond the questionnaires, or even the replies. It marked the first venture of the new Public Opinion Institute (*Institut Obshchestvennovo Mneniia*) in a society where, even now, the party's own pronouncements are deemed to be adequate expressions of the true state of the popular mood. Since then, the institute has completed two additional surveys, and has promised more.

The first poll was devoted to attitudes on war and peace; the second, to living standards; the third and most recent, to opinions of the young generation about itself. *Komsomolskaia pravda,* the Young Communist League newspaper which runs the institute, has provided summaries of the surveys.[1] What do the polls reveal? And what do they tell us about the regime's new line in public relations?

To appreciate the survey results, it is necessary to understand how the institute collects its information. By the most charitable standards, its techniques are crude and, in some instances, not acceptable.

In sampling, the institute combines hunch and expediency. Even though precise techniques and special rules normally govern the determination of appropriate sample sizes in various types of surveys, the institute, in its war and peace poll, arbitrarily decided on 1,000 (the figure "suggested itself") because "10 or 100 opinions would hardly be convincing" and "it would be impracticable to poll 100,000." As for the composition of the sample, the institute was guided by common sense (that treacherous companion which tells us that the world is flat) to choose, arbitrarily again, a particular geographical cross-section of the population. The results may or may not be representative, but we have no way of knowing—neither does the institute—what biases were introduced or how to allow for them. In the living standards survey, "conductors distributed the questionnaires . . . in a single carriage of each of 65 trains leaving Moscow one day," netting 1,600 replies. But who rides the trains? (Most of them were long-distance runs.) Industrial executives? Vacationing families? Youngsters going to new jobs? Fortunate tourists headed abroad? Certainly very few peasants, who constitute the largest—and most underprivileged—group in the society and whose inadequate representation in the sample must have colored the results. (The institute itself recognized that "collective farmers and agricultural personnel might be missed, for this was harvest time, when every hand is needed.") And in the last survey, on youth attitudes, readers of *Komsomolskaia pravda* were asked to clip a printed form from the newspaper and mail it to the institute. This almost certainly drew more than a random quota of Komsomol officers, activists, and enthusiasts.

The way in which the questions were posed also raises problems of validity. Not only a polling specialist, but almost any ordinary Soviet citizen, could have told the institute about the probable effect of using Komsomol and party people to hand out—and collect—questionnaires on a current political topic. Many, perhaps most, of the published replies to the war and peace survey were undoubtedly genuine, even movingly so. Yet in others the language suggests a keen awareness of an interested party interposed between the respondent's innermost thoughts and his blank questionnaire.

Other defects could be cited, but perhaps the institute's staff should not be judged too harshly. Not only are they novices in a technically demanding enterprise, but the development of survey techniques in the Soviet Union has been stifled by the regime's long-standing hostility to objective sociological inquiry. Probably the limitations of each survey result more from ignorance of methodology than intentional rigging. And though the institute's work can hardly be accepted as unimpeachable scientific evidence, it has produced some interesting bits of information.

THE RESULTS OF the war and peace survey reflect the still unhealed wounds left on the Soviet populace by World War II and the efforts of Soviet propagandists to exploit and manipulate deeply felt anti-war sentiments to support the government's foreign policy.

[1] *Komsomolskaia pravda* reported the war and peace survey on May 19, 1960; the living standards survey on October 7, 1960; the youth survey on January 11, January 26, and February 24, 1961. English translations used here are partly from *Current Digest of the Soviet Press,* Vol. XII, Nos. 20 and 41, and Vol. XIII, No. 2.

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There were three main questions in this survey: 1) "Will mankind succeed in averting a war?" 2) "On what do you base your belief?" 3) 'What must be done above all to strengthen peace?" Respondents were also asked to give their age, sex, and occupation, and to tell what losses they and their families suffered in the recent war. Signing the questionnaire was optional.

According to the institute, 96.8 percent replied that war would be averted. It is difficult to say how much of this confidence sprang from actual expectation, how much from the projection of hopes. (Also, the wording of the questionnaire may have suggested to some respondents that they were voting for or against war rather than expressing an opinion whether it would be avoided. Specifically, the inclusion of question 3 could be expected to trigger a larger affirmative response to question 1 than if the latter appeared alone.) In any case, the optimism of the sample was unmistakably high.

In the analysis of the second item, the institute succumbed to the temptation to make propaganda, and its conclusions went far beyond what the data warranted. "Four hundred sixty-eight persons," announced the institute, "base their 'Yes' on the great impact of the movement of the working people of all countries for world peace." How it arrived at this remarkably precise figure or what constitutes the "great impact of the movement of the working people of all countries for world peace," the institute did not say. Moreover, it used the poll to justify Khrushchev's wrecking of the Paris summit meeting, which took place between the distribution of questionnaires and the publication of answers. The institute noted that "only a few dozen mention their expectation of a favorable outcome of the Paris conference among all the arguments." (Most of the answers were couched in very general terms: horror of war, strength of the Soviet military establishment, man's aspirations for peace, and the like. There was thus no reason to be surprised that only a few respondents should have mentioned anything so specific as the Paris conference. Indeed, under the circumstances "only a few dozen" is a rather high figure.) Worst of all, the institute gave no opportunity for independent evaluation of the data, for its report included only a handful of illustrative responses which it considered to be typical.

So, too, with data from the third item, on what must be done to strengthen peace. We have only the word of the institute that the "Soviet people undividedly support the foreign policy of the Communist Party and the Soviet government aimed at the affirmation of the ideas of peaceful coexistence of the two social systems," and a few carefully picked corroborative examples.

Finally, the survey reflects the enormous personal tragedy of World War II for many Soviet citizens. Eight hundred ninety-four of the 1,000 respondents reported having suffered "serious losses" during the war. Considering that the area covered by the poll was almost entirely under Nazi occupation for some years, there is no reason to doubt the high proportion.

Of the three polls, the war and peace survey is the least satisfactory, not only from a technical point of view, but because it merely revealed what was already well known: that Soviet citizens, under proper stimuli (and here the use of Komsomol and party interviewers is of paramount importance) can faithfully reproduce what they read in the newspapers or hear from agitators. To what extent they have internalized these slogans may be another matter. A good poll would have shed some light on this important question. The institute's efforts revealed more about Soviet propaganda practices than about what people are actually thinking.

PERHAPS THE INSTITUTE learned something from its first experience, for the poll on living standards is better on almost every count. The methods used to collect the data still were not perfect, but the use of train conductors instead of Komsomol and party people was a great improvement; the statistical analysis was more detailed and straightforward; in addition, the topic itself was such that the experience of daily life made each respondent his own expert rather than an uncritical victim of petrified official prose.

In this survey, four questions were asked:

1) Has your living standard changed in recent years? (Risen, remained the same, declined.)

2) In what way? To what do you chiefly attribute this?

3) Which do you consider most urgent (underscore): reduction of the working day, increase in the output of consumer goods, housing construction, improvement in services, increase in food output, higher wages, enlargement of the number of children's institutions?

4) What do you suggest for the quickest possible solution of the problems indicated above?

Provision was made also for the respondent to indicate his occupation, sex, place of residence, size of family, number of breadwinners in the family, and, if he wished, his name.

The institute's report is too lengthy to give in detail, but the highlights can be given. According to the statistical summary, 73 percent of the respondents indicated a rise in their standard of living, 20 percent reported no change, and 7 percent claimed a drop. There were only slight variations, none of them statistically significant, according to region of domicile. (Remember, however, that the respondents were questioned on trains. We do not know how these traveling individuals compare with their neighbors at home.) Variations between occupational categories represented in the sample were also insignificant, except that a smaller proportion (though still a majority) of the pensioners and unemployed said that their living standards have improved.

The institute concluded that improvements have affected "*all* strata and groups of the population *without exceptions,* that indeed, every 'soul' in the country is benefiting from the rise in production" (italics in the original). On the basis of the institute's own figures, only the first part of the statement is true; the second is not, unless the 27 per-

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cent of the population who claimed a drop or no change in living standards disappeared after the poll was taken.

About one-third of the respondents declared that they benefited chiefly from the greater abundance of food and consumer goods; another third mentioned wage increases (however, only one-fifth reported that their own wages had gone up—some of the respondents evidently had family members in mind); others cited the shorter working day, job promotion, lower prices, increases in pensions, discontinuation of state loans, and (mostly the handful of peasants in the sample) reductions in taxes. Those whose standards failed to rise, or fell, cited reasons such as wife's unemployment due to pregnancy and childbirth, the expense of feeding a new baby, the "slowness with which prices are being reduced on many important foods and goods," no improvement or a cut in wages, the shortage of housing space and the need "to rent a room privately," loss of seniority, demotions, and retirement. Even allowing for a substantial margin of error in the institute's sample, these results no doubt reflect real changes which have taken place in living standards over the past years and which have been widely advertised by the party and government.

In responses to the third question, scare and substandard housing was the most frequent complaint: more than half of the respondents mentioned it. In connection with the same problem, a number of concrete suggestions for improvements were made, including the development of better and more efficient construction technology, the use of draft or volunteer labor to supplement regular construction personnel, the use of personal savings to buy apartments at state prices, easier availability of supplies for private home building, priority allocations to newlyweds, denying urban apartments to suburban cottage owners, and penalty assessments on housing space in excess of official norms.

Second in frequency was the demand for higher wages, mentioned by more than one-fourth of the persons questioned. Some respondents asked for a general wage increase, particularly for the lower-paid categories; others wished an adjustment in the system of wage scales to provide more equitable treatment for occupations they considered underpaid, "such as construction workers, school teachers and those employed in trade and services."

Dissatisfaction with the availability of consumer goods, a desire for better food supplies, and demands for improved children's institutions were each mentioned by almost one-fifth of the people in the sample. Numerous suggestions were advanced, from mechanization of farm production to the ousting of "conceited officials, 'know-it-alls' removed from the people."

In sum, the living standards survey was a reasonably workmanlike project. If there is room for argument with some of the institute's easy over-generalizations,[2] the poll provided some data from which an independent observer can draw his own conclusions. Though marred by inadequate attention to essential sampling and statistical criteria, it reflected at least an awareness of scientific procedure.

[2] For example: "The poll showed most convincingly that our people's living standard is rising at an exceptionally fast pace." *Perhaps it was, perhaps not. All the poll demonstrated* was that it was rising, and not rapidly enough to satisfy the populace.

THE YOUTH SURVEY, the results of which were reported in January and February of this year, asked the following questions of *Komsomolskaia pravda's* readers:

1) What do you think of your generation? Does it please you and are you satisfied with its goals?
2) On what do you base your opinion?
3) In your opinion, what traits are strongest in Soviet young people? Where are they most clearly in evidence?
4) In your opinion, are there any negative characteristics common among young people?
5) What justification do you have for your opinion?
6) Which of the following is, in your opinion, more typical of young people (underline one): purposefulness, a lack of goals?
7) Do you have a personal goal in life?
8) What is it?
9) What must be done to achieve it?
10) What have you already done?
11) Do you think you will achieve your goal?
12) On what do you base your conviction?

In the first four days after the blank questionnaire appeared in *Komsomolskaia pravda,* almost two thousand responses were received. No final count has been given as of the time this article is written, but it must have reached many times that figure. At this writing, also, the institute still has not published its own statistical summary of results and has made available only a few exemplary responses. Their tone ranged from total enthusiasm to utter disenchantment. Thus a twenty-five year-old carpenter from Stalingrad *oblast* wrote:

A year ago, I had the happiest day of my life—I was accepted to membership in the CPSU. On that day I gave an oath to justify the faith of the comrades who accepted me into their glorious ranks . . . . Our Communist Party and Soviet government have given to us, to youth, all essential conditions. Work! Study! Dare!

At the other extreme, a nineteen year-old working girl from Moscow said:

Money—this is everything. Luxury and well-being, love and happiness . . . If there is money, there are friends and comrades, there is everything you want. You condemn those who don't work, who won't do anything, but surely they can only be envied, since they know how to make use of life—we live only once!

A number of recurrent themes ran through many of the responses: great consciousness, and some anxiety, about completing education and moving upward on the social scale; a desire for excitement and adventure; complaints about juvenile delinquents and deviants. To attempt any further conclusions, however, would be to follow the insti-

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tute's practice of making grand generalizations from shreds of evidence. The youth survey provides some rich and informative vignettes of the mood of the new generation, but very few systematic data. Perhaps there will be more to go on if the institute adds to its initial reports.

THE OPINION POLLS provide a refreshing contrast to the absurd fiction that all Soviet citizens agree on absolutely everything. They are a sign of the regime's rising self-confidence and capacity to tolerate a certain amount of linen-washing in public.

However, the use of public opinion polls does not mean that the party and government have suddenly decided to submit to the *vox populi*. Conducting accurate opinion polls (and even this has not yet happened) is not enough. What topics are polled, when and how the polls are administered, and what use is made of the information they yield, all make a difference. For polls, like elections, are democratic inventions which can be used for non-democratic ends. The Soviet record of single-slate elections is well known. Will the regime abuse polling too?

Polls can be restricted to "safe" topics which can be expected to yield favorable responses. (Imagine the consequences, if, for example, the Soviet public had been polled a few years ago on whether its savings should be wiped out with the cancellation of the state loans!) Controversial political issues can be avoided, while the freedom to "disagree" is demonstrated by reporting a range of opinions on inconsequential matters. (Is it really so important to decide whether conditions should be improved by lowering prices or raising wages? Suppose the respondents to the poll on standards of living had been asked, instead, whether they favored less capital investment and smaller military expenditures?) And testing opinion *after* policy decisions have been made may suggest broad popular support in some instances, but this is no substitute for asking the people in the first place.

The temptation to wrap propaganda in the mantle of scientific authority is particularly strong when the government exercises a monopoly over the channels of communication. When this happens, polls lose their original function of *measuring* public opinion, and become tools to create and manipulate it. The institute must choose between legitimate and illegitimate use of polls. Thus far, it has wavered. If past Soviet performance is a guide, it will choose the latter. Soviet propaganda would then command a sophisticated and effective new technique—and science would be the poorer.

Allen Kassof

(An American sociologist especially interested in Soviet youth, Mr. Kassof will join the faculty of Princeton University next academic year. His "Afflictions of the Youth League" appeared in the September-October 1958 issue of this journal.)

Cultural Exchange: How Reciprocal?

THE RECENT REVALUATION of the ruble has brought about a good deal of confusion among economists. What should be the new ruble's parity with the dollar? One ruble to one dollar? Ninety kopeks to a dollar? The economists' difficulties, however, pale into insignificance when compared with those that are probably faced by the men entrusted with the setting up of the US-Soviet cultural exchanges. One must, of course, assume *a priori* that each country is trying to outdo the other qualitatively: that each country is exporting the very best examples of its cultural achievements. But what about the quantity? Is it fair to exchange the huge Moiseyev ensemble for a small American ballet troupe? Or an orchestra for a soloist? In the other arts, formalized exchanges have been limited to a small number of films and occasional shipments across the ocean of a few live poets, novelists and critics. (As a rule the American writers involved speak no Russian, and the Russians speak but very little English; since they also know very little about each other's works, the resulting literary cocktail parties are not excessively lively.) The cultural exchanges, however, include no provisions for the translation and publication of novels, poetry and drama, and here each country is at the mercy of the other's political and artistic tastes. In recent months, for example, complaints have been voiced in the USSR that the Americans are not playing fair; that while the Soviet market is allegedly flooded with American literature, almost no Soviet literary works are available in the United States; in short, that in the literary exchanges the Soviets are being "more reciprocal" than the Americans.

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Let it be stressed from the beginning that there is indubitably much room for improvement on both sides. There are significant works of Soviet literature that deserve to be published or republished in the United States (or, for that matter, in any country on this side of the Iron Curtain), just as there are many Western books, not available in the USSR, that the Soviet reader would find both interesting and enjoyable. Nevertheless, one must point out that because of misunderstanding and occasional willful distortion of the facts, Soviet presentations of the problem are frequently unjust and exaggerated.

What is more, some unwarranted Soviet statements on the subject of translations and book publishing have even evoked a degree of sympathy among misinformed American intellectuals. Perhaps the best known of the Soviet protestations is the article by Alexander Chakovsky, editor of the Moscow journal *Inostrannaia literatura* (Foreign Literature), which appeared in the April 2, 1960, issue of the New York *Saturday Review*. Chakovsky begins by pointing out:

Even in the "deep freeze" years of the cold war, our magazines and publishing houses did not, or virtually did not, reduce the printings of translations of Western belles-lettres.

The implications of the statement are misleading. As Soviet publishing statistics indicate (these can be found in any recent edition of *Kulturnoe stroitelstvo SSSR*), the end of the cold war coincided with a spectacular 350 percent increase in the amount of foreign literature printed in the USSR, demonstrating a clear link between the intensity of official animosity toward the West and the publication of foreign works of literature. Most assuredly Mr. Chakovsky is aware of this, being the editor of his country's only periodical wholly devoted to foreign literature. In fact, the journal itself was established only after Stalin's death.

Secondly, it must be remembered that Soviet publishing statistics (54 million copies of "books" by foreign authors in 1958-59) look somewhat less impressive in the light of the Soviet definition of what constitutes a book—a definition that is extremely flexible and embraces pamphlets no more than several pages long, which would not be considered books in the United States.

FINALLY, Mr. Chakovsky as well as other Soviet writers display an annoying inconsistency. When speaking of American literature published in the USSR, they refer not only to works by contemporary authors, but also (indeed primarily) to Jack London, Mark Twain, O. Henry and James Fenimore Cooper. On the other hand, when they discuss the publication of Russian literature in the United States, they usually limit themselves to Soviet belles-lettres of the postwar period, particularly the post-Stalin years. It is necessary to make a choice: If one discusses the publishing of *all* American literature in the USSR, then one must also consider the hundreds of American editions of Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky, Chekhov, Gogol, and other classics of Russian literature. Or if the literature considered is to be limited chronologically to that of the Soviet period, then the limitation should apply equally to both sides.

In the USSR, Mr. Chakovsky declares solemnly, "we cannot approach the publication of foreign literature from a purely utilitarian, political angle as is done in certain Western countries." There is, to be sure, one reservation: "Our reader is fond of and often prefers books that are close to him in ideological and spiritual content." Certainly. A recent good example is Howard Fast, who until his break with communism enjoyed the position of the most widely read modern American author in the USSR, but whose books thereafter disappeared from Soviet bookstores—for purely esthetic and commercial reasons, of course.

But in the United States, according to Mr. Chakovsky, political considerations do intervene:

. . . the Americans are deprived of the opportunity of reading Soviet books in their own language, and . . . American publishers are downright tendentious in selecting Soviet books for translation. What is more, as a rule the only modern works that are widely printed and popularized in your country are books like *Dr. Zhivago*, which can serve as subject matter for vicious attacks on our social system.

The statement is not entirely correct. For some weeks now, *The New York Times*—no left-wing publication—has been recommending to its readers in its Sunday Book Review Mikhail Sholokhov's latest book, the politically orthodox *Harvest on the Don*, as a work "rich in humor and compassion." A visit to an American bookstore would reveal many recently published books by Soviet authors who either have been favored by the party for a long time or have recently been "rehabilitated." To mention but a few: Leonid Leonov's *Thief*, one of the finest Soviet novels; *Early Joys* by Konstantin Fedin, the current secretary-general of the Union of Soviet Writers; Sholokhov's masterpiece, *The Silent Don;* Ilf and Petrov's *Twelve Chairs*, the best comic novel in Soviet literature; Fyodor Gladkov's crudely propagandistic *Cement;* Isaac Babel's brilliant impressionistic short stories; Yuri Olesha's sophisticated novellas; a bilingual edition of Mayakovsky, the Soviet poet-laureate; early novels by Ilya Ehrenburg; Vladimir Dudintsev's *New Year's Tale;* and numerous editions of the works of Maxim Gorky, the "father" of socialist realism. One recent anthology of Soviet short stories includes works by some of the authors mentioned above, as well as others by Panteleimon Romanov, Valentin Katayev, Mikhail Koltsov, Alexander Pismennyi, Konstantin Paustovsky, Sergei Antonov, Olga Diakova, Alexander Yashin, Yuri Nagibin, Vladimir Tendriakov, Oleg Bedara and Izrail Netter. Another volume offers works by Sergei Yesenin, Boris Lavrenev, Alexander Fadeyev, Andrei Sobol, Ivan Yevdokimov, Alexander Grin and Ruvim Frayerman. In a third, one also finds some writings of Alexei Tolstoy and Vsevolod Ivanov.

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All these are "honest" Communist writers. True, one can also buy Evgeni Zamiatin's *We,* a gloomy picture of a future totalitarian state antedating Orwell's *1984;* short stories by Mikhail Zoshchenko, the now half-heartedly "rehabilitated" satirist who was a victim of the Zhdanov purges in the late 1940's; and, of course, the writings of Boris Pasternak. Still, even this list—which is by no means exhaustive—shows that Mr. Chakovsky's accusations are largely unfounded. American readers have easy access to a rather generous sample of Soviet literature—all brought out by "tendentious" American publishers. It should be stressed that, with one exception, each of the works enumerated above is available in a paperback edition, which means that these books are generally cheaper and more widely disseminated than most hard-cover books.

Let us assume, however, that a conspiracy exists among American publishers not to put out an edition of a particular Soviet book in the United States. Even this would not mean that an American with no knowledge of Russian could not avail himself of such a book. The Foreign Languages Publishing House in Moscow brings out belles-lettres in scores of languages, including English. These books are sold freely in the United States, as are Soviet books and periodicals in the original Russian. Interested readers outside the major cities where bookstores specializing in Soviet books are located learn about Soviet books through advertisements printed in American newspapers and magazines as well as in the usual catalogues, and they can order these books by mail. Perhaps the time has come for the reciprocal opening of similar bookstores in the USSR; at the present time there are none. The importation into the USSR of Russian translations of American books not printed by the Soviet publishing houses would certainly contribute to a better understanding of American culture by the Soviet citizenry.

IN AN EFFORT to acquaint its readers with Soviet culture, the American *Atlantic Monthly* devoted its June 1960 issue to Soviet literature and arts. The issue contained a variety of excellent articles written by a Soviet motion picture director, a ballet critic, and a theatrical director, as well as several examples of Soviet literary writing. The latter included a chapter from Sholokhov's *Harvest on the Don,* a fine story of murder and revenge set before the revolution; a poem by Pasternak (introduced here as being "in the front rank of contemporary Soviet writers"—this after Pasternak's expulsion from the Union of Soviet Writers; *Doctor Zhivago* was described, with disarming understatement, as "still a subject of controversy"); Marshak's memories of Gorky (before the revolution); Mayakovsky's virile poem "The Brooklyn Bridge"; a lyric poem by Shchipachev; an excerpt from Leonov's *Thief,* a novel set in the 1920's; a passage from Tvardovsky's World War II poem *Vasili Tyorkin;* Simonov's sentimental letter from Tashkent, extolling the exotic beauty of Central Asia; Fedin's little essay on Tolstoy; a chapter from Valentin Katayev's *Lonely White Sail Gleams,* a novel dealing with the adventures of two teen-age boys in prerevolutionary Odessa; Olga Berggolts' moving memoirs of the siege of Leningrad during World War II; and a rather unsuccessful humorous story by Sergei Antonov.

This issue of the *Atlantic* thus included some first-class Soviet literature and made, on the whole, an excellent impression in the United States. A reader in California called it "a breath of fresh air," and another in Washington, after denouncing "the crimes committed by the Russian leaders," declared that "it would be helpful, however, if we could hear more from such kind and cultured Russians as Mr. Simonov and some of his colleagues." (Mr. Simonov, incidentally, was the author of one of the most vicious anti-American plays of the Stalin era, *The Russian Question.*) A clue to the success of the *Atlantic* collection could be found in a tongue-in-cheek letter to the editors from Ernest J. Simmons, a foremost American scholar in the field of Russian literature: "In fact, the issue is quite superior to any issue of corresponding Soviet periodicals, such as *Novyi mir* and *Oktiabr.*"

The truth is that the selection of works in the *Atlantic* was most unrepresentative of Soviet literature. With one exception, all of them are set either in prerevolutionary Russia or in the chaotic years of the New Economic Policy and World War II, and deal with events in the context of human emotions rather than socio-political categories. Not one projects before American readers the usual image of the positive Soviet hero embodying the officially prescribed virtues of hard work, ideological militancy or at least loyalty, and the ability to suppress personal desires whenever these conflict with his duties as a citizen. Not one contains the conflict that is so typical in Soviet literature, with its almost inevitable ritualistic happy ending in which the virtuous hero triumphs over the despicable villain. On the contrary, Berggolts' memoirs deal with the problem of human suffering as an individual rather than a social experience, while Tvardovsky's poem touches one of the most carefully avoided themes in Soviet literature—and, as the Polish philosopher Adam Schaff recently pointed out, in Communist writings generally—the problem of death.

For some years now, this writer has been teaching a college course in Soviet literature. The students enrolled in the course have various social backgrounds and are specializing in different fields, from English literature to mathematics. Before taking the Soviet literature course, most of them have taken a course in Russian literature of the nineteenth century. Inevitably, in the course on Soviet literature, a sense of disappointment prevails. While the reading consists, for the most part, of the best examples of Soviet writing, it must necessarily also include some of the typical output of the practitioners of socialist realism. Each time the course is offered, the undergraduates complain about the artistic quality of the typical work of Soviet literature. It is too crude, not subtle enough, they say; it is overly didactic; the protagonists lack psychological depth; the author's sympathies are too obviously on the side of the

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positive personages, and the villains are not given the opportunity to present their case with any degree of persuasiveness. In short, these nineteen-year-olds find Soviet literature too juvenile, and they would rather read the great Russian classics. It is ironic, yet logical, that American students should arrive independently at the same conclusion that was reached long ago by the great mass of Soviet citizens, who prefer rereading the masterpieces of nineteenth-century Russian literature to reading the great bulk of the newer works of fiction.

Few American lovers of serious music are unfamiliar with such Soviet composers as Prokofiev and Gliere, Shostakovich and Khachaturian. Does this mean that the Soviet authorities or *obshchestvennost*—the semi-official elite—are under a moral obligation to assure an equal number of American composers an equal degree of public recognition and popularity in the USSR? Does the demand in the Soviet Union for the works of Hemingway and Miller, Steinbeck and Faulkner—a demand which is, incidentally, far from being adequately met—impose on American publishers the duty to translate and print each new Lenin Prize-winning Soviet novel? Just how much reciprocity *must* there be in cultural exchanges?

Maurice Friedberg

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Correspondence

EDITORS' NOTE: Readers are welcome to send communications dealing with matters discussed in *Problems of Communism*. Comments should be addressed to the Editors, *Problems of Communism*, U.S. Information Agency, 1776 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W., Washington 25, D.C.

THE COMMUNIST UTOPIA

TO THE EDITORS: Your delightful reply to Mr. Mstislavsky (in the March-April 1961 issue) makes a number of telling points. It is important, however, to correct your parenthetical remark . . . that "no one has ever given the slightest indication when this utopian condition [communism] would arrive." I think this is in error.

An editorial in *Pravda* for November 2, 1960, says that "this utopian condition" will be achieved in this generation. This is rather more than a "slight indication" even if it is not very explicit. It is also true that Lenin made a remark shortly before his death that he did not expect to see communism but that many of those listening to him would see it. Also not very explicit—rather indefinite, in fact, in comparison to the *Pravda* editorial.

The "building of communism" is a real promise in the USSR, especially since the 21st Party Congress. Khrushchev has associated himself with the program. (It is true, of course, that he has left himself many loopholes such as "first stage of communism," "creation of Communist consciousness," "overcoming of the differences between the city and the village," *etc.*) He has embarked on many programs designed to change the life and attitude of Soviet citizens. It is a serious program. I think that *Problems of Communism* should take it a bit more seriously than to consider it just another of the many cases of Soviet mouthings. . . .

WALTER DARNELL JACOBS
Arlington, Virginia

IN REPLY: The *Pravda* editorial to which Mr. Jacobs refers contains the following statement: "[Our Leninist party] took upon its shoulders a task that is gigantically complicated and difficult, though noble and majestic: to construct communism during the life of this generation." Not only is there no explicit promise here that communism "will be achieved in this generation," but even as a vague programmatic pronouncement the passage is barren of meaning without some definition of the party's central goal. This, of course, is not a novel difficulty. Communist prophets from Marx to Krushchev have always been studiously vague about the characteristics of communism as the future social order. It will be, we have been told by Marx and Engels, a classless society, a stateless society, a self-governing society that lives without private property in conditions of universal plenty and functions according to the principle "from each according to his ability, to each according to his need." Is this the kind of social order Mr. Khrushchev

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and his associates have in mind when they hint at delivering "communism" during the lifetime of the present generation? They certainly have not said so. Or could they perhaps mean "catching up with America" in standards of living?

All this, however, is not to deny that the Soviet leaders are preoccupied with the "building of communism," that, apart from developing the economic basis of the Soviet state, they are anxious to bring to life a society of men and women imbued with "Communist morality," and that to this end they have already introduced various innovations in the apparatus of ideological control and persuasion. What is more, we are in complete agreement with Mr. Jacobs that these Soviet efforts are to be taken seriously—so much so, indeed, that we devoted our entire November-December 1960 issue to examining them.—*The Editors*

SOVIET ROLE IN BURMA

TO THE EDITORS: Since material on Burma and Southeast Asia appears infrequently in your pages, I always welcome publication of such material. I was particularly interested in reading John H. Badgley's thesis chapter, "Burma's Radical Left—a Study in Failure" in the March-April 1961 issue. His is a competent summary. That such material has already appeared in books and articles by Brimmel, Cady, Rose, Thomson, Tinker and Trager, in no way detracts from the desirability of additional exegesis.

But I am indeed curious as to why you have waited until now to treat the subject. I am also curious as to why you have not questioned the key paragraph in Mr. Badgley's article with respect to the meaning of the Bombay and Calcutta meetings, following the organization of the Cominform in September, 1947. That Mr. Badgley, is, of course, completely free to adopt whatever interpretation he wishes is the case, but that this is an issue over which there is considerable debate is also the case.

Briefly, the issue in question concerns the role of the Soviet Union and its agent, the Cominform, in transmitting the strategic line adopted at the September 1947 meetings in Poland. Some commentators on South and Southeast Asia, including some of those cited in Mr. Badgley's footnote 7, page 50 (*e. g.*, Kautsky and McVey) do not find what they choose to call documentary evidence to prove that the Cominform in fact transmitted Soviet left or revolutionary strategies via India—revolutionary strategies which were soon carried out in Burma, Malaya, Indonesia and elsewhere in the area. Others, including this writer, have argued that the search for "documentary" evidence is, in itself, unrealistic; and that historically, at least since the Sixth Comintern meeting, the Soviets have found other ways of conveying their policies and their instructions, ways which do not necessarily result in pieces of paper in files or libraries, available to Western researchers.

In the study which I did for the RAND Corporation, *Marxism in Southeast Asia,* I based the case for Soviet causal involvement in the 1947-48 Bombay and Calcutta meetings, on what I believe to be highly probable *circumstantial* evidence, evidence which comports with established Soviet transmission techniques. In my view this constitutes an advance over the position adopted by Kautsky and McVey. I do not believe that Mr. Badgley offers any new evidence for his assertions on page 50, nor does he offer any refutation of the opposing view. Furthermore, his statement about the Burma Communist party's reaction to the Socialist role in the new government is clearly in error, since the BCP had already been excluded from the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League which formed the independent government on January 4, 1948. The AFPFL, under the leadership of General Aung San and Thakin Nu (later Prime Minister), voted the BCP out of the coalition group in October-November 1946.

Since I believe the proper interpretation of the Bombay 1947-Calcutta 1948 Communist and Communist front meetings have both historical and contemporary operational significance, I have taken the trouble to write to you about this in the hope that the editors of *Problems of Communism* would be concerned about ventilating more adequately the issue here involved.

FRANK N. TRAGER
Professor of International Affairs
New York University

MR. BADGLEY REPLIES: I take pleasure in this opportunity to acknowledge the many contributions made by Professor Trager . . . which assist in understanding Burmese post-independence political and economic affairs. . . . As is apparent from his letter, however, we do not agree in our interpretations of the facts bearing on an issue "over which there is considerable debate," to use Professor Trager's wording. My interpretation . . . appeared in the following passages of my article:

With the advent of independence, there were signs of a stiffening of BCP policy, seemingly encouraged by contacts with outside Communist parties. H. N. Goshal, a member of the BCP leadership, had been in Calcutta during the December 1947 session of the Indian Communist Party Central Committee, and had reportedly held consultations on policy questions with leaders of the CPI. . . . There were further contacts in February 1948, when Than Tun himself attended the Communist-sponsored Southeast Asia Youth Conference in Calcutta, at which a number of foreign Communist delegations, including one from the Soviet Union were present. . . . The evidence pointing to possible outside pressures on the Burmese Communists just before the insurrection should not, however, be taken as proof that the action of the BCP was primarily the result of the Soviet instigation. In fact, it appears more likely that whatever pressures or influence may have been exerted served merely to sanction a course which the BCP leadership already felt impelled to take because of considerations connected with

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the domestic struggle for power. The decisive factors behind the BCP action probably were the Socialists' acquisition of a dominant voice in national policy formulation and the exclusion of the Communists from cabinet posts in the new government.

Until a more thorough study of the period is completed, based on primary accounts by those Burmese who attended the conference in question, we will all have to depend upon an unsatisfactory array of secondary sources. Meanwhile what can we do with the information at hand? The issue is one of causal relationship. Do the facts (1) that the Burmese Communist leaders commenced their insurrection on March 29, 1948, one month after returning from the CPI meetings and a Cominform-sponsored Asian Conference, and (2) that this conference was devoted to arousing national sentiment against Western colonial governments, add up to a sufficient condition for asserting that the revolt was caused by Soviet directives based on a grand strategy adopted in July 1947. Rather than a sufficient condition, I suggest that the meetings were more likely contributory to a policy already decided upon—a policy to revolt when public support was aroused, if the Socialist-dominated government refused to place top radical leftists in positions of power.

Professor Trager observes that the BCP had been "voted out of the coalition group (AFPFL) in October-November 1946," implying that the Communists had been excluded already then from the formation of the new government. The information I have at hand, which is also available in *A Chronology of Burma's International Relations, 1945-1958* (a compilation by Professor William C. Johnstone and the staff of the Rangoon-Hopkins Center), indicates that on October 13, 1946, Aung San did, indeed, advise the AFPFL to expel the BCP for "sabotaging the national unity." But what transpired between that date and December 1947 when Goshal departed for the CPI meetings in Bombay and Calcutta? This was not a time of inactivity while the Communists waited for a directive from outside. In both John Cady's *History of Modern Burma* and Thomson's chapter on Burma in Trager's volume, *Marxism in Southeast Asia,* there is evidence of active negotiation and continued jostling for positions of power by the Socialists and the BCP. The Communists dominated a number of the central and upper Burma districts. They actively organized in the villages and armed party members during this period. Their popular strength, although not sufficient to capture more than seven seats in the first parliamentary elections of April 1947, was acknowledged by the inclusion of pro-Communists in the First Development Plan conference, by the use of Communist terminology in the Two-Year Plan and the Constitution, and most significantly by the AFPFL decision to cut all political ties with the Commonwealth. Up to September 1947 there is considerable proof of interaction and collaboration between the two groups. Then the Constituent Assembly unanimously approved the Constitution on September 24, 1947. Thakin Nu, the new premier, appointed no BCP leader and only one pro-Communist, Bo Po Kun, to the cabinet. From that time forward there is no indication of active cooperation with the government.

Once Than Tun no longer had a legitimate means of exercising power, what did the BCP have to gain by not utilizing its strongest assets, a disciplined and dispersed party and an armed force? By sending his major theoretical adviser to the CPI party sessions, which were controlled by the radical leftist faction under Ranadive, Than Tun concluded a 14-month period of indecision and occasional collaboration, and made an overt move which indicated sympathy with the new Cominform doctrine. There was nothing secret about BCP representation at these meetings; to the contrary, it was well-publicized in Rangoon and seemed more like one final threat to the AFPFL.

The spark that ignited the insurrection was the great public response to Than Tun's appeals in Rangoon on March 27 and in Yamethin the following day. In these two speeches the BCP leader sought support in a drive against the Socialists that would end "in a river of blood, Socialist blood." Government estimates of 75,000 attendance at the Yamethin address, a record gathering for any district function, suggests that Than Tun was finally convinced by his own popular success that insurrection was a feasible policy.

Apart from the validity of my own or Professor Trager's views on this issue, I regret that this now relatively academic point should have been the only matter raised for discussion. What is significant about the Communist movement in Burma is that it was once powerful and is now weak as a party or military force. This is contrary to the trend in several neighboring Southeast Asian countries. That the movement may nevertheless have appeal in the future seems likely for the reasons I offered in my article. To me the key question remains: Why has Burma's radical left failed to seize power? In attempting to answer this question, I raised several more central issues than the one discussed here.

A COMPLIMENT

TO THE EDITORS: I have just finished reading the article by Donald S. Zagoria on the Soviet-Chinese problem in the March-April issue of *Problems of Communism,* and I hasten to tell you how good I think it is.

As one who writes in the field of foreign affairs, I want you to know how invaluable I find *Problems of Communism.* This is especially so with such articles as that by Mr. Zagoria. It is a pleasure to have an expert appraisal which gathers together bits and pieces which one working on a daily deadline is so seldom able to do for himself.

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